

# Attractions

MAGAZINE

Spring 2019  
Volume 12, Issue 2 • \$6.99

## Wastin' Away Again in Margaritaville Resort Orlando



**Theme Park Pics from Above**

**Celebrating Apollo's 50th at NASA**

**Attractions in Kingdom Hearts III**

**Wolfgang Puck's New Restaurant at Disney Springs**

**PLUS:**

**Updates, Rumors,  
Games, Cartoons  
& More!**

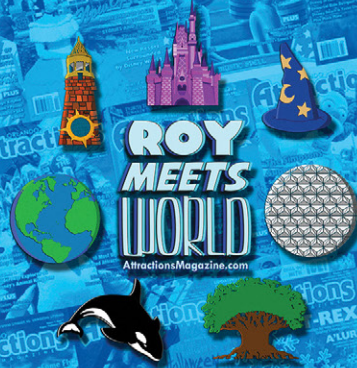


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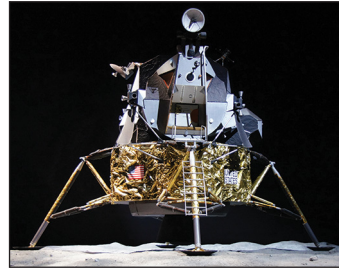
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# WHAT'S NEW ON ATTRACTIONSMAGAZINE.com

By Banks Lee

Check our website regularly for more articles and videos. Stay up-to-date with all the latest theme park and attraction news through our weekly videos and shows, our free iPhone/iPad app and our free e-mail newsletter.

## NEW ADVENTURES



Our "Attractions Adventures" vlog series continues with videos from SeaWorld San Antonio and Las Vegas! Also be on the lookout for new vlogs from California soon. Be sure to subscribe to our YouTube channel to be notified when more Adventures are available.

## THE RUMORS ARE QUEUING



Construction is nearing the final phases for two big projects in the theme park world - Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Disney and the new Harry Potter roller coaster at Universal Orlando. As the opening dates get closer and closer, rumors about these experiences are beginning to unravel. We have been posting many online only Rumor Queue columns on our website detailing what we've heard in regards to the storylines for these attractions, as well as aerial construction photos. Be sure to check them out and let us know what you are excited about!

## GLITTER, GLITTER EVERYWHERE

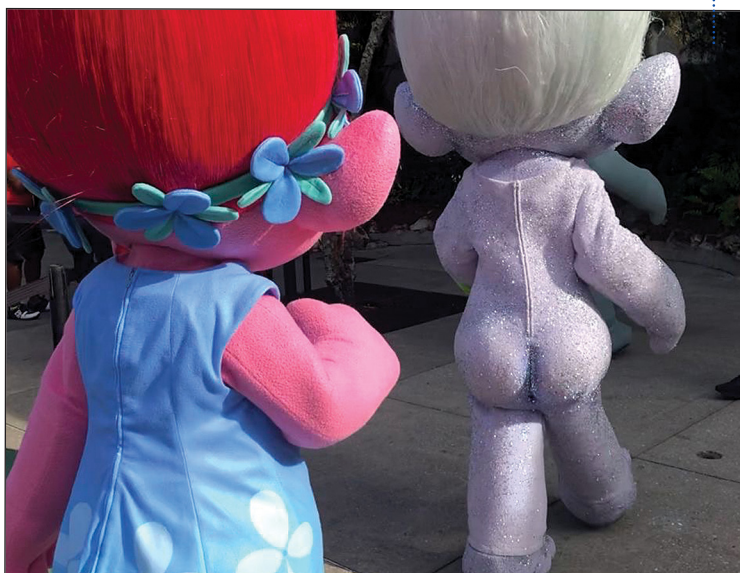


PHOTO BY QUINN ROSEBOM

In what has become a viral sensation that no one saw coming, Universal Orlando has introduced us to a character from the film "Trolls" named Guy Diamond. What's so unique about him is that he farts glitter. No only in the film, but in real life. That's right, guests can meet a naked, glitter-farting troll in the Kids Zone area of Universal Studios Florida. It must be seen to be believed, so head to our website for a look at the viral videos.

## REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE

It's a great year for fans of "The Lion King". Not only are we getting a live action retelling, but the original animated film is celebrating its 25th anniversary. A special Q&A seminar hosted by our own Banks Lee was held during the Epcot International Festival of the Arts featuring 12 of the animators who worked on the 1994 Disney classic. You can find the full presentation on our YouTube channel and hear stories about the making of "The Lion King" and life at the Disney Feature Animation Studio.

## LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter @Attractions, on Pinterest at Attractions, on Instagram at attractionsmagazine and our Facebook page at facebook.com/attractionsmagazine. We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and live videos while we're inside the theme parks. You can also see our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at youtube.com/attractionsmagazine. Be sure to click on the bell icon to be notified when we post new videos.





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# FEEDBACK

Favorite Fan Photos and Stories.



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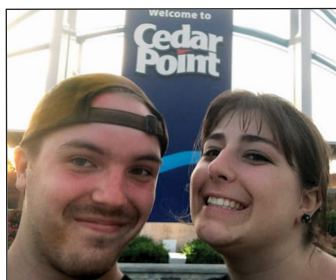
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I love Jurassic Park so much, I had to meet Blue in Universal. When I did, I was the last person and I was crying of joy. At first, they thought I was scared, but I was so happy! They made the experience very personal and let me send her off to go get a snack.  
— Katrina Occhialini



It's not a theme park, but we love the roller coasters. I grew up going to this park, so I have some amazing memories.  
— David Cornell



Spending the day with my oldest — just goofing off and having a great time together at Universal Studios. — Angela J Ringland



Here is my family and I at Walt Disney World in June for my 40th birthday! I love "Attractions Magazine" so much. It's a daily part of my life. Thank you for all you do. — Rodney Medeiros



We loved Skipper Ben's Top Ten on finding snow in Orlando. We've done eight, need to go back and find the last two now! Here is a picture of us at Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party last October. It's the best time ever at the Magic Kingdom. — Kevin, Tara and Jack Broderick



Busch Gardens Williamsburg has always been one of my favorite theme parks. The whole park is just gorgeous, and my daughter adores the lorikeets! She spends hours feeding them every time we go. — Sidney Lee





I love being able to take my baby to meet my favorite people as a child! — Katie Carpentier



Me and some of my best friends about to ride one of the craziest rides at my favorite place, Cedar Point. — Julius Moody



My mom, husband and I bottle feeding a kangaroo at Busch Gardens Tampa. This trip is a very special one for me, because it gave me an opportunity to spend time with my mom and let her experience feeding a kangaroo. It was also one of the last trips to this park with my husband, after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. This will always hold a special place in my heart. It is a priceless memory. — Feisty Philly Chick



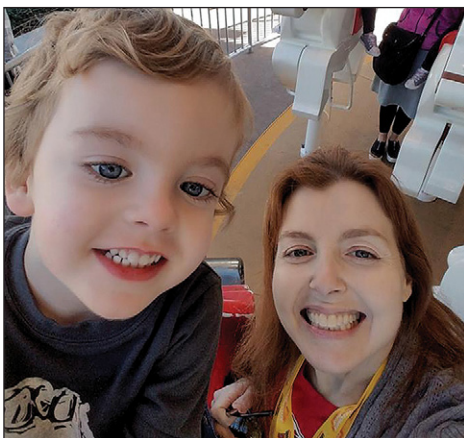
We love our fun family trips to Busch Gardens Tampa! It is our favorite "zoo" to go to and has some of the most thrilling rides in Florida. It's definitely a family favorite! — Crystal Basone



Hello I'm Michael from New Orleans. My husband and I love the show, the magazine and Disney. We would love to share a favorite picture from the parks. — Michael Banko



Hanging with the boys is always a fun time. — Allen Boyd



Me and my son at Legoland. We love how close it is to home and that it's far less crowded than the Orlando parks. — Christine Gatti Peltier



Me with my niece, nephew, sister-in-law and good friend in the station for Millennium Force at Cedar Point. We take an annual trip every summer from Florida to see them and go to the best park. We had an amazing day checking out all our favorite rides, and of course, Steel Vengeance. — Jason Gillo

## WRITE TO US!

We want your letters and photos!

If you have any comments about the magazine, questions about traveling to theme parks or fun stories or photos to share, simply e-mail us at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).





## THEN & NOW

### The Landing at Pleasure Island

By Matt Roseboom

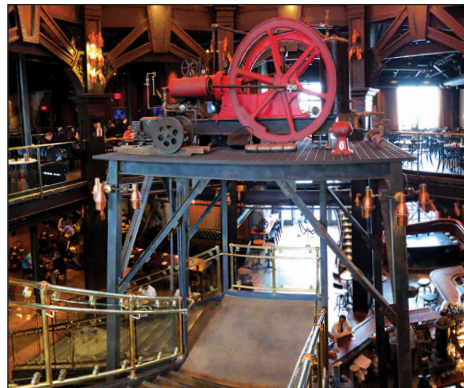
**N**ew visitors to Walt Disney World likely don't even realize The Landing section of Disney Springs used to be very different. This area used to be known as Pleasure Island, and although the walking paths are pretty much the same, almost all of the buildings have had major changes. Pleasure Island was a nightclub area with separate admission for most of its time. What was the fan favorite Adventurers Club is now The Edison. In fact, the spaces once occupied by the BET SoundStage Club and Adventurers Club, now house four restaurants: The Edison, Pizza Ponte, Maria and Enzo's Ristorante and Enzo's Hideaway.

The Adventurers Club was a nightclub filled with travel artifacts and souvenirs, which helped with the stories told by the actor characters you'd meet inside. One of the main characters in the club was known as the Colonel. He was a puppet who would talk to the guests and characters from a small balcony. The Colonel now resides at Walt Disney Archives at the Walt Disney Studios in California. As you can see, the inside and outside of the Adventurers Club received major changes. It's unrecognizable.

#### THEN ▼




#### NOW ▼





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# COMING ATTRACTIONS

Upcoming attractions you may want to plan your vacation around.

By Banks Lee



## JALEO

**Location:** Disney Springs West Side; formerly Wolfgang Puck Grand Café

**Opening Date:** Spring 2019

This restaurant will feature a menu of tapas that reflect the regional diversity of traditional and contemporary Spanish cuisine, such as paella cooked over a wood fire, hand-carved Jamón Ibérico de Bellota, and wood-grilled Ibérico pork. This location will also include a quick-service window, Pepe by José Andrés, though it has no set opening date.



## THE LEGO MOVIE WORLD

**Location:** Legoland Florida; formerly The World of Chima  
**Opening Date:** March 27, 2019

The Lego Movie World will feature three new rides: Unikitty's Disco Drop, Battle of Bricksburg and The Lego Movie Masters of Flight, which will take guests on a suspended ride aboard Emmet's Triple Decker Flying Couch surrounded by a full-dome virtual screen, giving the sensational feeling of flying through a world created completely from Lego bricks.



## ISLAND H2O LIVE!

**Location:** Margaritaville Resort Orlando

**Opening Date:** April 2019

This new water park won't be just for guests of Margaritaville. Everyone is invited to visit this new high-tech water park.



## LIGHTNING MCQUEEN'S RACING ACADEMY

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios; inside Sunset Showcase

**Opening Date:** March 31, 2019

This new show experience will welcome guests to the world of Disney/Pixar's "Cars" films, bringing them face to face with racing legend Lightning McQueen.



## WONDERFUL WORLD OF ANIMATION

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios

**Opening Date:** May 1, 2019

As part of the 30th Anniversary of the park, this new projection show will use state-of-the-art technology to take

## ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: NANO BATTLE

**Location:** Hong Kong Disneyland; formerly Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters

**Opening Date:** March 31, 2019

On this new attraction, guests will take an ordinary visit to the S.H.I.E.L.D. Science and Technology Pavilion at Stark Expo, where things suddenly take a turn as they are called into action. They will climb into S.H.I.E.L.D.'s state-of-the-art vehicles and engage in battle alongside Ant-Man and The Wasp as they fight Arnim Zola and his army of Hydra swarm-bots.



guests on a magical journey through more than 90 years of Disney animation, all beginning with Mickey Mouse.





### SESAME STREET LAND

**Location:** SeaWorld Orlando; formerly Shamu's Happy Harbor

**Opening Date:** Spring 2019

Sesame Street Land will be an immersive area featuring rides, dry and wet play areas, and interactive experiences designed for the entire family — plus a new parade.

### TIGRIS

**Location:** Busch Gardens Tampa Bay; formerly Tanganyika Tidal Wave

**Opening Date:** Spring 2019

Set to be Florida's tallest launch coaster, Tigris will send riders through looping twists with forward and backward motion, drops, a 150-foot skyward surge, and an inverted heartline roll — all at over 60 miles per hour.



### GRAN DESTINO TOWER

**Location:** Disney's Coronado Springs Resort

**Opening Date:** July 2019

This tower will be the new main entrance point for guests visiting Disney's Coronado Springs. The tower will add 545 new guest rooms, including 50 suites, and feature a two-story lobby. A themed table-service restaurant is also planned.

### NBA EXPERIENCE

**Location:** Disney Springs; formerly DisneyQuest

**Opening Date:** Summer 2019

Inspired by the modern architecture of new NBA arenas, the state-of-the-art space will include interactive games and competitions, immersive experiences, a retail store, and an adjacent restaurant.

COMING SUMMER 2019



### CITY WORKS EATERY & POUR HOUSE

**Location:** Disney Springs; formerly DisneyQuest

**Opening Date:** Summer 2019

This lively eatery and pour house-style restaurant will offer a large draft selection of local, regional and global craft brews with a constantly rotating draft list, complemented by classic American cuisine with chef-driven twists.



### CALICO RIVER RAPIDS

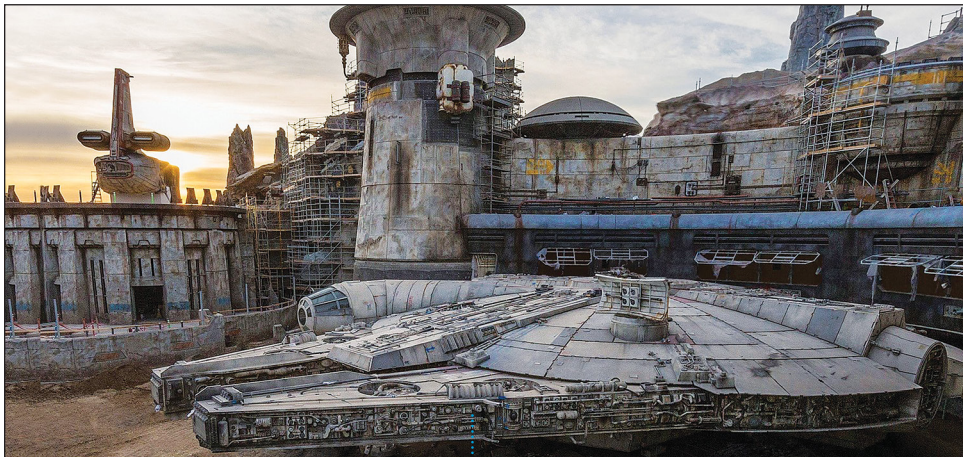
**Location:** Knott's Berry Farm; formerly Bigfoot Rapids

**Opening Date:** Summer 2019

Knott's popular white water raft ride will undergo a major renovation to add new features to the attraction, including new animatronics, themed show scenes, a new story overlay, and dynamic water effects.







### STAR WARS: GALAXY'S EDGE

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios; formerly Streets of America and Lights, Motors, Action! Disneyland, formerly backstage area

**Opening Date:** Summer 2019 (Disneyland), Fall 2019 (Walt Disney World)

This new area will invite guests to explore a never-before-seen planet in the Star Wars galaxy, complete with two new attractions. Guests can take the controls in one of three unique and critical roles aboard the Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run. On Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance, guests can join an epic battle between the First Order and the Resistance — including a face-off with Kylo Ren.

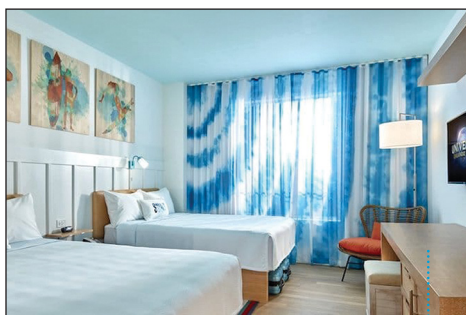


### EPCOT FOREVER

**Location:** Epcot; formerly IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth

**Opening Date:** Fall 2019

A limited-time experience, this nighttime spectacular will be set to classic Epcot tunes. The show begins with a spark of imagination that quickly grows into a spectacle of fireworks, music, lighting, lasers, and choreographed special effects kites.



### UNIVERSAL'S ENDLESS SUMMER RESORT (FIRST PHASE)

**Location:** International Drive; formerly Wet 'n Wild

**Opening Date:** Summer 2019

Surfside Inn and Suites will offer nightly rates starting at just \$73 for a seven-night stay and \$85 per night for a four-night stay in a standard room. The hotel will feature 390 two-bedroom suites that sleep six and start as low as \$111 per night for a seven-night stay.



### MICKEY AND MINNIE'S RUNAWAY RAILWAY

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios; formerly The Great Movie Ride

**Opening Date:** Fall 2019

The first ever ride-through attraction themed to Mickey Mouse will feature a new original story and theme song as it takes guests on a journey inside the wacky and unpredictable world of Disney Channel's "Mickey Mouse" cartoon shorts.



### DISNEY SKYLINER

**Location:** Walt Disney World Resort

**Opening Date:** Fall 2019

This new gondola system will connect Disney's Hollywood Studios and Epcot to four nearby resort hotels — Disney's Art of Animation Resort, Disney's Pop Century Resort, Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort, and the upcoming Disney's Riviera Resort.







## HAGRID'S MAGICAL CREATURES MOTORBIKE ADVENTURE

**Opening Date:** June 13, 2019

For the first time ever, guests will fly with Hagrid on a thrilling roller coaster ride that plunges into the path of some of the Wizarding World's rarest magical creatures.

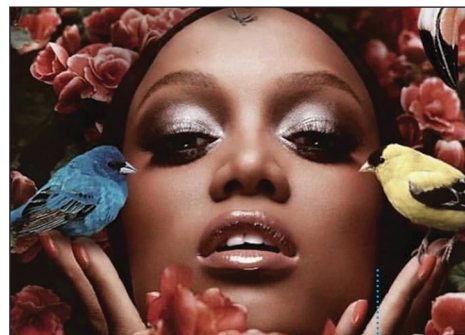


## O CANADA! UPDATE

**Location:** Epcot's Canada Pavilion

**Opening Date:** 2019

The "O Canada!" 360-degree show will receive an upgraded film.



## MODELLAND

**Location:** Santa Monica, Calif.

**Opening Date:** Late 2019

Supermodel turned entrepreneur Tyra Banks recently announced the construction of Modelland, a new ticketed attraction set to open in late 2019 at Macerich's Santa Monica Place. The 21,000 square foot facility will bring a fantasy version of the modeling world to life through state-of-the-art interactive entertainment, creative collaborations, curated retail, dining and special events.



PHOTO BY JANE GOLDBERG

## JURASSIC WORLD: THE RIDE

**Location:** Universal Studios Hollywood; formerly Jurassic Park: The Ride

**Opening Date:** 2019

This next-generation thrill attraction will introduce never-before-seen dinosaurs, enhanced storytelling, scenic design, a new color scheme, and state-of-the-art technology.



## WILDWOOD GROVE

**Location:** Dollywood

**Opening Date:** 2019

Dollywood's newest land will feature 11 experiences for guests, comprised of six unique ride attractions, including a suspended family roller coaster called The DragonFlier; a 55-foot-tall Wildwood Tree; live entertainment; various indoor and outdoor play areas for families to enjoy; a new restaurant and more.



## "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" SING-ALONG

**Location:** Epcot's France Pavilion

**Opening Date:** 2019

A special sing-along of the classic Disney film, created by Don Hahn, producer of the animated and live action "Beauty and the Beast" films.



## 2020 AND BEYOND

- New Play Pavilion - Epcot
- Redesigned Entrance Area - Epcot
- Zootopia land - Shanghai Disney
- Tron Lightcycle Power Coaster — Magic Kingdom
- Guardians of the Galaxy E-ticket ride — Epcot
- Remy's Ratatouille Adventure — Epcot
- Space-themed restaurant — Epcot
- New Circle-Vision show for the China pavilion — Epcot
- Nighttime transformative spectacular — Epcot
- New restaurant in the Japan pavilion at Epcot
- Star Wars-themed immersive hotel — Walt Disney World
- Reflections: A Disney Lakeside Resort — Walt Disney World near Fort Wilderness
- Marvel-themed lands — Disney California Adventure, Hong Kong Disneyland and Walt Disney Studios park
- Redesigned castle — Hong Kong Disneyland
- Frozen and Star Wars-themed lands — Walt Disney Studios Park
- Frozen, Peter Pan and Tangled-themed lands — Tokyo DisneySea
- Beauty and the Beast and Big Hero 6 attractions — Tokyo Disneyland
- Super Nintendo World — Universal Studios Florida, Hollywood and Japan
- Universal's Endless Summer Resort (second phase) — Universal Orlando Resort
- Universal Studios Beijing theme park
- New Sesame Place theme park
- Updated Gwazi roller coaster — Busch Gardens Tampa Bay
- Legoland New York theme park
- Pirate Island Hotel — Legoland Florida Resort





# NEWS IN THE QUEUE

By Brittani Tuttle

## FRIENDLY FIRE

LOCATION: Worldwide locations

Zero Latency, one of the pioneers in free-roaming multiplayer virtual reality gaming, has launched a new game called “Sol Raiders” where players can now battle their friends, making it the first player-versus-player free-roaming VR game.



## WELCOME TO OUR TROPICAL HIDEAWAY

LOCATION: Disneyland Park



Disneyland Park’s newest oasis, The Tropical Hideaway, is now open to guests. The Hideaway can be found between the world-famous Jungle Cruise and Walt Disney’s Enchanted Tiki Room, and offers unique eats with a view of the tropical shores of Adventureland.

## A CAROUSEL OF COLOR

LOCATION: Disney California Adventure



After nearly a year of being closed, California Adventure’s iconic nighttime show, “World of Color”, has officially reopened. Reservations are now available for dessert viewing parties.

## BIG FUN IS BREWING

LOCATION: Downtown Disney District



Ballast Point Brewery & Kitchen recently opened its first Orange County location at the Disneyland Resort. The brewery serves more than 50 styles of beers across 100 taps, plus specialty brews that are exclusive to the Disney location.



PHOTOS BY DISNEY



## A LIVING, FARTING DISCO BALL

LOCATION: Universal Studios Florida

Much to the delight of social media, Universal Orlando has introduced a new DreamWorks Trolls meet-and-greet character. His name is Guy Diamond, and he's naked and farts glitter. He's sure to brighten your day, as long as you like seeing a naked glitter Troll fart.



PHOTOS BY QUINN ROSEBOOM

## FLYING IN FROM PARADISE FALLS!

LOCATION: Disney's Animal Kingdom



PHOTO BY BANKS LEE

The large and exotic bird known fondly as Kevin from Disney-Pixar's "UP" has migrated north from Paradise Falls and is now meeting guests on Discovery Island. Like other birds, he doesn't stand still for long, so grab a photo of him when you can.

## BYE BYE BOULANGERIE

LOCATION: Universal Studios Florida



Jan. 7 was a sad day for pastry lovers, as the Beverly Hills Boulangerie at Universal Studios Florida permanently closed its doors. The new cafe will be called Today Cafe and will feel as though guests are stepping onto the "Today" show set, and offer a menu of specialty food and beverage options.

## LET'S MIX SOME MAGIC

LOCATION: Disneyland Park



PHOTOS BY DISNEY

Mickey's Mix Magic, an all-new nighttime spectacular, is now taking over the façades of Main Street, U.S.A., It's a Small World and the water screens on Rivers of America. The show features state-of-the-art projections, lighting, lasers, sometimes fireworks and plenty of remixed tunes from your favorite Disney and Pixar films.



## WELCOME TO METROVILLE

LOCATION: Disney's Hollywood Studios



Pixar Place has been transformed into a new Incredibles-themed area, complete with the citizens of Metroville, plenty of dancing, and all your favorite Supers. Guests can also meet Edna Mode in the redesigned Woody and Buzz meet area - just remember: no capes!

## WELCOME TO ZOOTOPIA!

LOCATION: Shanghai Disneyland



Shanghai Disney Resort has announced it will be adding a brand-new land themed to one of Disney's newest animated films, "Zootopia." This new land will be unique to Shanghai, and will feature a major attraction, merchandise locations, entertainment and dining offerings. Construction is expected to begin later this year.

## YO HO, A PIRATE'S HOTEL FOR ME!

LOCATION: Legoland Florida Resort



Avast, mateys! Legoland has announced its newest on-site accommodation, Lego Pirate Island Hotel, will open in spring 2020. This will be the resort's third on-site hotel, which will offer 150 rooms, a heated pool and pool deck, hundreds of Lego models, and even a pirate ship out front!



PHOTOS BY LEGOLAND

## ILLUMINATIONS GOES DIM

LOCATION: Epcot



After almost 20 years of spectacle at Epcot, "IllumiNations: Reflections of Earth" is coming to an end. This nighttime spectacular will host its final performance at the end of this summer to make way for a temporary new show, titled "Epcot Forever". In 2020, a new unnamed nighttime spectacular will debut featuring massive floating set pieces, custom-built LED panels, choreographed fountains, lights, fireworks and lasers.



## EVOLVING EPCOT

LOCATION: Epcot



Walt Disney World has revealed new details on the park-wide transformation of Epcot for the resort's 50th anniversary in 2021. The park's now-defunct Wonders of Life pavilion will be transformed into a new "Play Pavilion" filled with interactive experiences featuring Disney characters. The park's entrance will be transformed into a new plaza filled with green spaces and a newly reimagined fountain that pays homage to the original entrance. The Leave A Legacy photos will be moving to a new location, just outside of the park gates. They will also receive enhancements to make them look better than ever.

## FUN PHOTO-OPS AWAIT

LOCATION: Universal Studios Florida

A brand-new My Universal Photos location has popped up in the façade of The Darkroom. This new offering allows guests with a My Universal Photos package to come in and take fun, themed photos with two green screens.



## LET'S MOUSEKEDANCE!

LOCATION: Magic Kingdom



As part of Mickey and Minnie's birthday celebration at Walt Disney World, an all-new version of the "Move It! Shake It!" street party, called "Move It! Shake It! MousekeDance It!," is now inviting guests to dance with Mickey and friends. This new parade also features live singers performing new arrangements of classic songs.







## PHOTO FINDS

Theme parks and attractions are always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.



The **Epcot International Festival of the Arts** returned in January with more of the same, but a few new things. In addition to arts of all kinds being celebrated, the Disney Broadway series expanded to each night of the event, **Disney character art** could be found hidden in the country pavilions and a new **mermaid photo opportunity** was added to the others from previous years. Just after the event ended on Feb. 25, the International Flower & Garden Festival began on March 6.



A restaurant at the **Magic Kingdom** was open for the first time in a long time recently. **Aunt Polly's on Tom Sawyer Island** was open for a few hours each day during the busy holiday season, serving sweet tea, barbecue sliders, pretzels and more.





Guests can step onto **actual sets** from **"The Lego Movie 2"** at **Legoland California**. The film's heroes, Emmet, Lucy, and their co-stars, can be seen in their hometown of Apocalypseburg in miniature scale, and park guests can meet the characters in person as well, including the first appearance of **General Sweet Mayhem**. The film's **writer Chris Miller** brought his family to the opening of the new limited-time attraction.



PHOTO BY MELANIE GABLE



PHOTO BY MELANIE GABLE



**Marvel Day at Sea** was held on select sailings on the **Disney Magic cruise ship** out of Miami, and will return early next year. It's a full day of Marvel characters, talks, shows and more. It's like a convention at sea. New this year was the addition of **Captain Marvel**. She's in the nighttime show and guests can also meet her during the day.







# VERSUS

We put attractions head-to-head.

## MEETING CHARACTERS

The Walt Disney Company is famous for its huge cast of characters, but Walt Disney World isn't the only place to meet some lovable faces. Universal Orlando also offers a wide assortment of meet and greet options, from farting glitter trolls to the leader of the Decepticons. With so many characters to meet, which theme park resort do you head to?

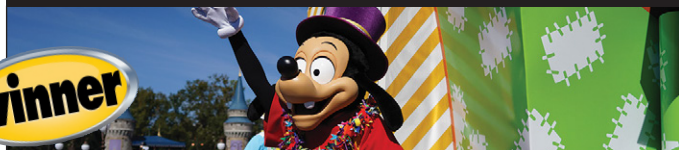
### WALT DISNEY WORLD

# VS.

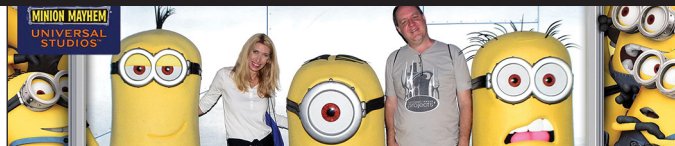
### UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

#### QUANTITY OF CHARACTERS

**winner**



Walt Disney World has four unique theme parks, each with multiple meet and greet areas. The Walt Disney Company has produced new characters from the 1920s until now. With 90-plus years in the business, these characters have really started to stack up.



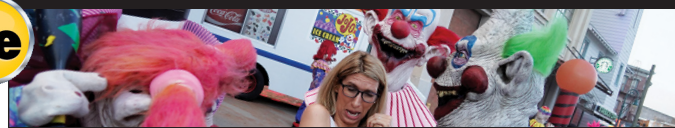
While Universal Orlando may not have as many characters as Walt Disney World, they do have some that would surprise you. Guests are able to meet characters from Marvel films, the SpongeBob television show, the Despicable Me films and Jurassic World.

#### LIMITED-TIME CHARACTERS

**tie**



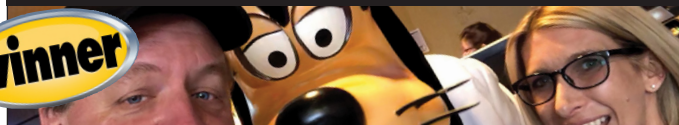
For guests who are dying to meet every character, special event tickets are essential. The Halloween and Christmas parties are a must do for guests hoping to meet Mickey and Minnie in holiday outfits, or maybe even a rare villain like Maleficent.



Universal Orlando also brings out a highly-sought-out selection of characters near the holidays. Grinchmas is the perfect time to showcase your mischievous Christmas-loving self to the live-action Grinch himself. Then, for Halloween Horror Nights, guests can see and interact with extremely rare characters of horror, from franchises such as Killer Klowns from Outer Space.

#### DINING MEET & GREETS

**winner**



The only thing better than breakfast is breakfast with your favorite pals. With 14 permanent dining locations, it's easy to have a character meal any time of the day, no matter what side of Walt Disney World you are on.



Fans who want to get a guaranteed shot with some of their favorite characters can look no further. With a year-round Despicable Me and Marvel dining experience, there is always a way to meet some friends. Guests can also seasonally partake in meals with the Grinch and Halloween Horror Nights scare actors.

#### VARIETY OF CHARACTER TYPES



Disney is famous for its huggable and lovable cast of characters; even the Disney villains have their happy side. Other than Star Wars characters, nearly all of the shows, parades and meet and greets are Disney-centric.



**winner**

Universal Orlando gives guests the option to meet characters from a multitude of different properties like Marvel and the Wizarding World of Harry Potter. From farting glitter trolls to spell-casting wizards and even the occasional frightening meet-up with a blood-covered chainsaw-wielding maniac, guests never truly know who is going to show up next.

#### CHARACTER-BASED SHOWS

**tie**



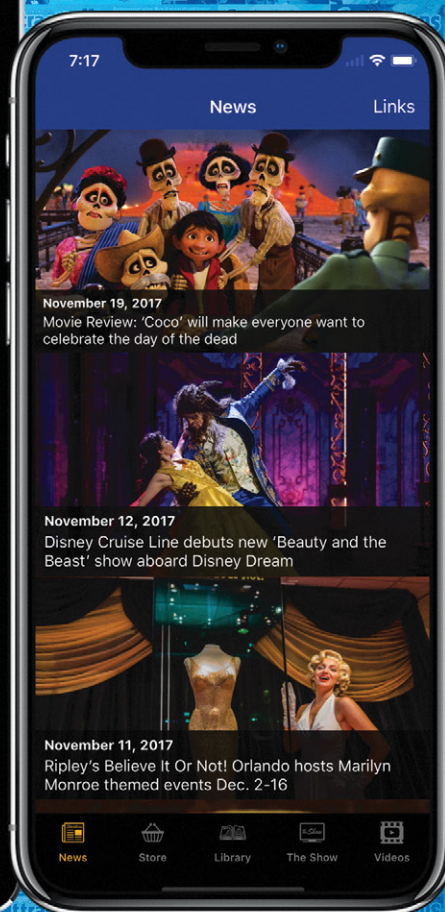
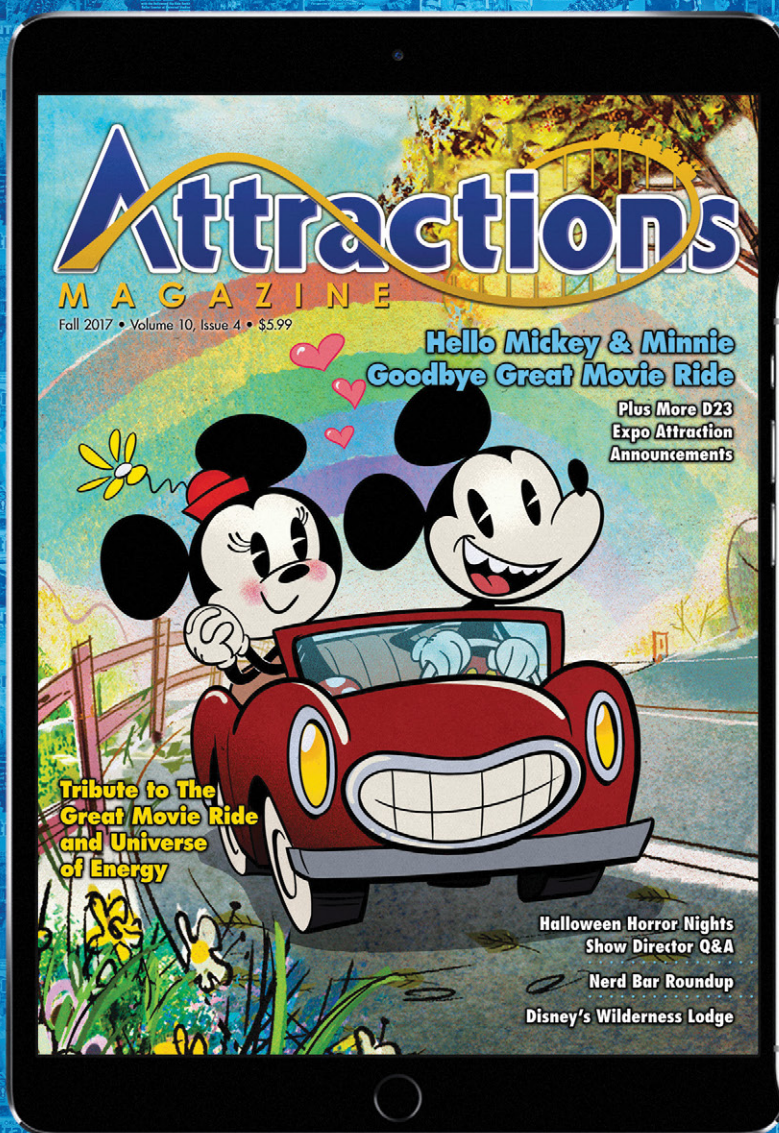
Walt Disney World has characters in nearly every single show. Characters, whether in person, or represented by screens, appear in fireworks shows, parades, magical moments and theater performances.



Universal Orlando also offers a ton of places to experience their cast of characters, like in their new nighttime lagoon show, Universal Orlando's Cinematic Spectacular. Guests can also see characters during parades, surprise moments and stage shows.



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# Former Walt Disney World Ambassador Has Stories to Tell

Ken Facey grew up in Brooklyn watching Walt Disney World videos with his grandmother. Years later, he would be an integral part of Disney's celebrations, as one of the 2017-2018 Walt Disney World Ambassadors. And oh, the stories he has to tell!



For Ken Facey, holding the banner on the right, the opening of Toy Story Land at Disney's Hollywood Studios was just one of many memorable moments as a Disney Ambassador, like appearing with Mickey, above.



### How did your love for Disney begin?

I'll never forget watching Mickey Mouse coming down Main Street, U.S.A. on the 15th Birthday Celebration video and saying to the camera, "Oh my goodness, we're here at Walt Disney World celebrating the fifteenth year!" Then, at the sound of a gong, cast members and celebrities appeared on Main Street, U.S.A. to celebrate. I used to watch that about six or seven times a day and I would ask my mom, "Can we go to Disney World?" Finally she said, "Yes, we're going to go." We went with my cousins, and we drove all the way to Lake Buena Vista from Brooklyn. When the parade came down Main Street, I was just in awe. But really what I was in awe about was how kind the cast members were to my family, and the way they interacted with other cast members and guests. I said, "I want to work here." Since then, I've been a fan of Disney parks, and that expanded when I started to read books about Walt Disney animation and how Walt created Disneyland. I'm still in awe when I walk into the theme parks. I've been at Walt Disney World for 12 years, and I kid you not, I still pinch myself that I'm a part of it.

### What did a cast member do that stands out for you during that first trip?

We were on Main Street, U.S.A., and a cast member was interacting with a family that had a very concerned look on their faces. The cast member went away for a couple of minutes and came back with a gift for one of the guests. The way the guest looked at the cast member, it was like a hero being born. Maybe I was at a very impressionable age, with super heroes and whatnot, but to me, that was a hero right then and there because of the way the guest reacted. I will never forget the happiness that guest had, and I assure you they went through the park and had an incredible day all because of that one cast member.

### What do you remember most about becoming a cast member?

I was hired in September of 2006, on

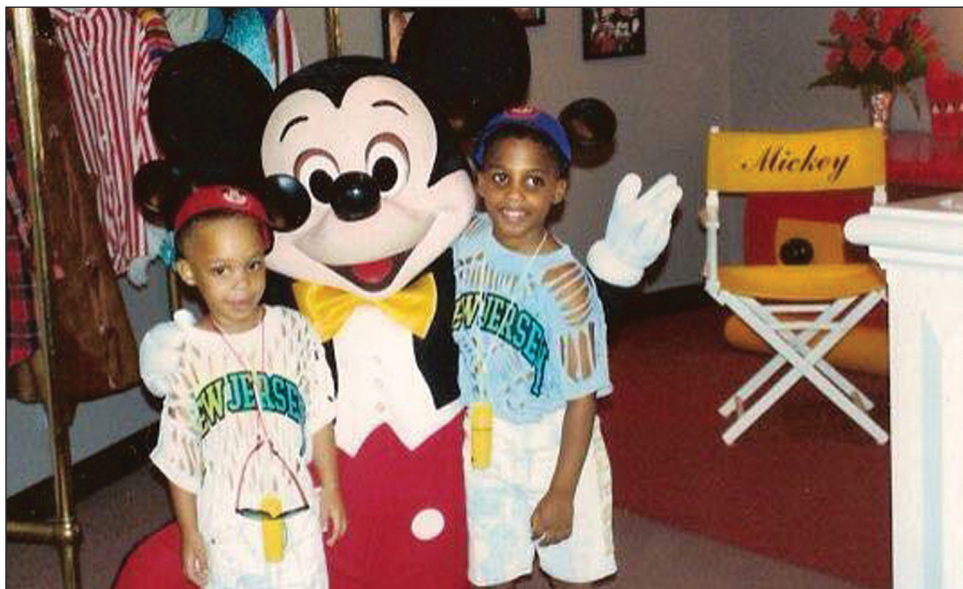


Facey standing outside the Anaheim Convention Center during Disney's D23 Expo.

the Disney College Program, and that October we launched the Year of a Million Dreams. In October, the very first sweepstakes prize was given away, and it was a family that got the Magic Kingdom to themselves for three or four hours. They were told they were just going to come to the Magic Kingdom, stand on a red carpet and wave to the cameras. What they did not know was that when they waved to the cameras, a trumpet fanfare came from the top of the buildings on Main Street

and this announcement said, "Spangler family, welcome to your Magic Kingdom!" At that moment, thousands of cast members, all mixed together from different areas, ran out from the sides of Main Street, U.S.A. to surprise them. The mom and dad shed a tear and the kids were just beside themselves. Mickey and Minnie walked them down Main Street, U.S.A. to go on their very first ride, and they were grand marshals in the parade later that day. That was the first Dream





A young Facey with his brother Greg Mortley and Mickey Mouse at Walt Disney World. Greg also now works at Walt Disney World.

given away. As a little boy in Brooklyn, I watched a moment [like this with Mickey Mouse], and now I'm a part of it.

#### **What were you doing before the Ambassador role?**

I started in Tomorrowland attractions, then went to Frontierland attractions, then I worked Sunset Boulevard, worked at the Hollywood Tower Hotel, Rock 'n' Roller Coaster, Guest Relations at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Guest Relations at Downtown Disney, Guest Experience Manager at the Grand Floridian, and Concierge at the Grand Floridian. Then I went into leadership a few years later, and I did Guest Correspondence, where all the letters come in about a guest's stay.

#### **How did you become a Disney Ambassador?**

I went through a rigorous process that culminated with a final interview with the president of Walt Disney World, George Kalogridis, and his steering committee. But the process really began a few months before that. All cast members go to an information session to really understand what the Ambassador role is, and understand the application and interview process, and then they apply like any other role. The first few panels [decide] which candidates are going to move forward. They have an interview, become a semi-finalist, then a finalist. Finalists do interactions around the resort to get prod-

uct exposure, and it culminates with that final interview with George Kalogridis. Then they select you. This is not the first time I applied for Ambassador. I applied for the 2015-2016 team, and the day I was [scheduled] to interview was the day of my wedding. My wife said, "Hey, don't be late," and I wasn't, but I interviewed and the feedback I got was, "Ken, your mind wasn't really there." I told them I was getting married that day, and the panel was like, "Oh my goodness, what were you doing?" I was interested in the role, that was the time they gave me, and I was going to respect that and do my best. They encouraged me to come back out for the role, and I was selected for 2017-2018.

#### **How did you feel when you were introduced as Disney's newest Ambassador?**

It was an intimate ceremony. We were in Team Disney with George Kalogridis, Mickey Mouse, the current Ambassadors at the time, Caitlin Busscher and Nathaniel Palma, and myself and [co-Ambassador] Brandon [Peters]. We were told we had to go back up to do one last interview, and this time the interview was going to be on camera and we had to read off a teleprompter. We went up there, they gave us mics, we read off the teleprompter, and even though I messed up the lines, the "director" said, "That was perfect. Now we're going to do the real

thing." We thought, "What's the real thing?" Mickey Mouse was there, When You Wish Upon A Star came on, and George stood in the middle and said, "This is not an exercise, this is the real thing. You are the new Ambassadors." I stepped back, and I was like, "Oh my gosh, did I really just hear that?" Sure enough, that was it. All the Ambassador alumni were hiding behind a curtain, so when we were announced, the curtain dropped and there they were, clapping for us. It was just so much to process. They put our pins on, I put my name tag on, and I gave Mickey Mouse a hug. Brandon and I gave each other a hug, they took photos, then we went to the Magic Kingdom and were Grand Marshals of the parade. While we were waiting backstage to go out to the parade [...] it hit me. We went on the parade route, we heard our names on the Magic Kingdom speaker, and all the former Ambassadors, our leaders, the leader who hired me to be a manager at the Grand Floridian, and our families were waiting for us at the train station. Seeing my mom, my wife and my cousin, it hit me at that moment. I thought, "Wow, this really happened and these people are taking time out of their day to come and celebrate. I hope I do a good job!" Two days later I was sitting on my couch, all by myself, and the tears just started to roll down my face. I couldn't believe it happened. I felt so humbled and honored and appreciated. Even though the term [has] ended and I got a little emotional, it isn't because I'm sad that it's over, it's because I'm so grateful that I got to do it.

#### **What would an Ambassador's typical day be like?**

Our day can begin as early as 2 a.m. or go as late as 2 a.m., and one of the longest days we had was Epcot's 35th Anniversary. Brandon was going to be the emcee of the rededication of the park, and there was also a Be Well event at Disney's Animal Kingdom for cast members and their families to do a 5K in the park. Rehearsal time for Brandon started at 4 a.m., and the race that I was at started at 4 a.m., so we both went out at four o'clock in the morning to do that. I met up with him [after rehearsal] to greet D23 members and host them for the rededication of the park. There was another D23



event that we spoke at, a little celebration for everyone who opened the park that day, and D23 had a night event which we then spoke at. Our day went from 4 a.m. to about 1:30 a.m. the next morning.

**During your time in the role, were there any stories that really stood out for you?**

Yes. Disney was a sponsor for the Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year, and I got to go to Atlanta to speak on behalf of Disney, and Mickey Mouse got to come with me. While we were up there, we also went to the Atlanta Children's Hospital. I went to get the elevator and there was a family [who] all turned around when the doors opened and looked at me, and they were like, "Oh, is this the third floor?" and I was like, "No, this is the second." The little boy had a Mickey Mouse shirt on, and I said to him, "You need to come off the elevator right now." The parents said, "No, we're going up one," and I said, "No, you need to come out right now. Please!" They came out, and in perfect timing Mickey Mouse came around the corner. The little boy said, "Am I dreaming?" He just hugged Mickey Mouse so tight. The family couldn't believe it actually happened. The dad looked at me and said, "Thank you so much for taking us off the elevator. This is what we needed right now." Any time we travel with Mickey Mouse, it's special, but that memory is particularly special for me.

**What would you say to children who aspire to become a Disney Ambassador?**

Continue to dream, continue to do your studying, remain grounded and never give up. Growing up, I had a learning disability and I was placed into special education resourcing classes. I was going to a class, and kids who I thought were my friends were helping me with my books. When they learned I was in this different class they all started to laugh, poke fun at it, and any time I mentioned I wanted to go and work at Walt Disney World someday, some of those kids were thinking I didn't have the talent to do so. At that age, I thought that myself. But you kick down the doors and you follow your dreams. All I've wanted to do was wear a [Disney] name tag, and I've done so for much of my career. If I had listened to those kids



Another highlight for Facey and Peters was a cast member event at Disney's Animal Kingdom, and a great photo opp in Pandora – The World of Avatar.

growing up, I don't know if I'd have been here.

**What will you do now?**

I'm honored to be a manager of Walt Disney World Premium Services, and I'll be a part of the team that manages and creates brand new experiences coming to the Walt Disney World Resort in the future. As we lead up to Walt Disney World's 50th Anniversary, we have so much in store for our guests, and new experiences coming, and I'm proud to be a part of creating some of those itineraries. It's going to be awesome!



The two ambassadors also got to meet Captain Ron at Disney's Vero Beach Resort. Captain Ron is a special dog who helps to mark and preserve sea turtle nests.

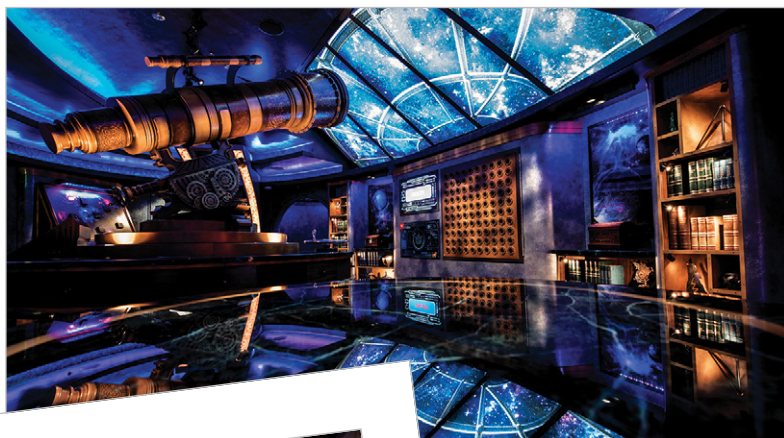


By "Skipper" Ben Rebstock

## Top 10 Cruise Ship Attractions

So, I just returned from an amazing seven day cruise on the Norwegian Bliss out of Miami. While I was on the ship, I thought to myself how the entertainment offerings on cruises have really changed since my first sailing almost 20 years

ago. It's almost like they've become floating theme parks. So let's take a look at the Top 10 theme park-like things you can do while sailing on a cruise ship. I am a skipper after all, so this is kind of in my area of expertise.



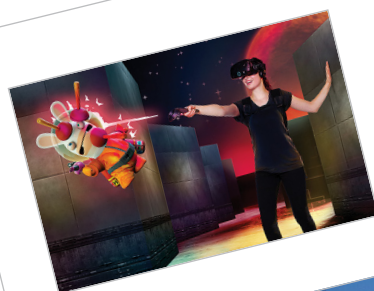
# 10

### ESCAPE ROOMS

Escape rooms have become popular all over the country, and now they have found their way onto cruise ships. The small amount of space needed for an escape room make them perfect entertainment additions to a ship. Escape the Rubicon and The Observatory are both highly detailed experiences that can be found on Royal Caribbean ships. Norwegian Cruise Line converts dining establishments not being used during lunch hours into escape rooms for their Escape The Big Top game. Escape rooms on cruise ships are not only a great way to spend an hour at sea, but because you are often times matched up with other people, it's also a great way to make new friends and meet people on your cruise.



PHOTO BY SBH/PHOTO



### VR ROOMS

The Void has not only been a popular addition to both the Walt Disney World and Disneyland resorts, but VR rooms have started opening up all over the country in places like Las

Vegas, Chicago and New York City. It's amazing the worlds these VR experiences create in such a limited amount of real estate, again, making them perfect for a cruise ship. In 2018, Royal Caribbean added Sky Pad VR Trampolines to the top of their ships that created a VR world while, you guessed it, you jumped on a trampoline. But later this year, the brand new Norwegian Encore will debut their new Galaxy Pavilion which will house a VR room, escape room and an augmented reality experience. This addition shows the major leap cruise lines are making in investing into cutting edge technologies.



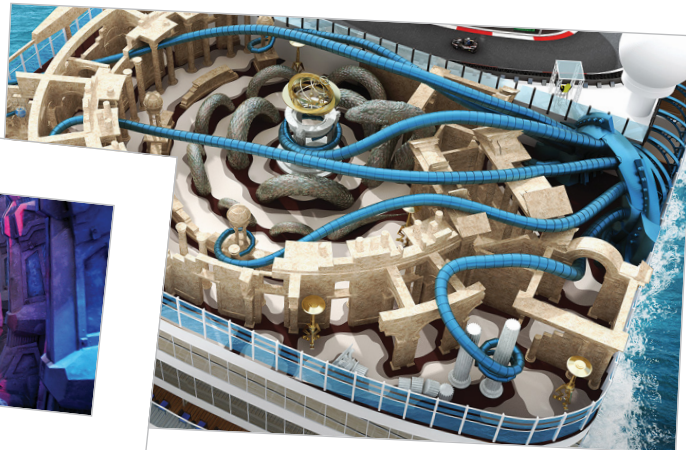


# 8

## LASER TAG

I just got off the Norwegian Bliss where my family and I had an absolute blast playing their new outdoor laser tag

experience. The arena on the Bliss is set atop the highest level of the ship in an outdoor setting, which made playing at night under the stars and the moon a very unique experience. The game floor is large enough to hold teams of up to 14 people each. Laser tag has proven to be so popular with Norwegian that a brand new arena designed around the lost city of Atlantis is being designed for the new Norwegian Encore. Inflatable, temporary laser tag arenas are used on Royal Caribbean ships Symphony, Independence and Mariner of the Seas on select nights.



# 7

## ROPES COURSES

Sure, ropes courses on land are exciting, but how about doing a ropes course 15 to 20 stories in the sky, on top of a moving vessel, while sailing across the ocean? That's what you get to do on some of the amazing ropes courses you can find on cruise ships. The Norwegian Escape has a two story ropes course, complete with two planks that extend 10 feet off the side of the ship for real daredevils. Ropes courses are now also common on all of the newer Carnival ships. And the best part — the courses are free to do on your cruise, so climb away as much as you want!

# 6

## ZIP LINES

Previously, if you wanted to zip line while you were on a cruise, you had to find a spot at one of the ports you stopped in on your trip. But Royal Caribbean became the

first cruise line to add zip lines to ships when they added them to their Oasis-class vessels, bringing this amazing activity to you at sea. Both the Allure of the Seas and Oasis of the Seas feature 80-foot long zip lines that fly over their Boardwalk District found at the back of each ship. I was lucky enough to do this on the Allure and it was a highlight of my trip. The best time to do it is during days a ship is in port. So while everyone else is off the boat, you can zip line over and over again all you want with no waits.



PHOTO BY SBW-PHOTO



PHOTO BY SBW-PHOTO



# 5

## GO-KARTS

Yeah, you read that right. You can now go-kart on a cruise ship. The Norwegian Bliss debuted the first go-kart track at sea this year. The two-story track uses electric karts that zip and zap through

a surprisingly long course. Up to eight riders can race the single karts, and if you have someone not quite big enough to drive yet, special times are set up for double karts to hit the track and race. It's a huge hit on the ship and reservations often fill up immediately on the first day (at a charge of \$10 per race). The experience has been so popular that Norwegian is adding a track to the new Encore later this year.



**BOLT**  
ULTIMATE SEA COASTER

# 4

## ROLLER COASTER

OK, so if you thought go karts on a cruise ship sounded crazy, how about a roller coaster at sea? Yep, we've gone there now as Carnival has announced that Bolt: Ultimate Sea Coaster will make its debut on their brand new Mardi Gras ship next year.

The vertical rail track will be built high above the top deck of the ship and promises to have "race car levels of acceleration" as the two seater car flies through the air 187 feet above the sea. Sign, me, up!

# 3

## CHARACTER ENCOUNTERS

You might have noticed a lack of Disney so far on this list, but they are about to make a big splash here at the end, starting with the character interactions guests can have while on their ships. You never know who you might run into while on a Disney cruise, but there's probably a pretty good chance you'll get a picture or two with Mickey Mouse and many of his friends while aboard. And to take things to the next level, Disney offers special themed days, such as Marvel Day at Sea, and Star Wars Day at Sea where you can meet many characters from those franchises, including some rarely seen in the parks!





# 2

## SPECTACULAR SHOWS

Stage shows on cruise ships have been a staple for many, many years, but as the arms race between the companies to outdo each other in entertainment offerings continues, these shows have grown from cheap imitations seen in decades past to Broadway-quality spectacles. On Disney ships, shows like “Tangled: The Musical” and “Beauty and the Beast” (based on the live action movie) are exclusive to the cruise line. Other cruise lines partner with production companies to put on shows you’d pay full price in New York or Las Vegas to see, such as “Jersey Boys” on the Norwegian Bliss. Always be sure to check your ship’s itinerary and plan your activities around whatever shows are offered on your cruise; they are not to be missed.



# 1

## AMAZING WATER SLIDES

Pull up to any port, look up at the top of the ships, and one thing you will now see on nearly every vessel are water play areas covering the upper decks. And we aren’t just talking about some small slide from your public pool. We are talking about massive rides you’d find at any water park. Disney really kicked off the trend with the AquaDuck water coaster on the Disney Dream, and now every cruise line is finding ways to keep the party wet and wild while on board. From double loop water coasters to slides that extend in clear tubes off the sides of ships, from water play areas for the kids, to surf rider simulators, there are a ton of different options you can find to have fun under the sun in the water while on your cruise ship.

**DO YOU AGREE WITH BEN OR HAVE A SUGGESTION FOR A FUTURE TOP TEN?**

Let us know at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com) or contact Skipper Ben on Twitter @RealSkipperBen



# IT'S THE YEAR OF APOLLO AT THE KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

By Susan & Simon Veness

**F**ifty years ago, the world watched in awe as the first man stepped foot on the moon, creating one of the most memorable phrases in history and putting the Kennedy Space Center (KSC) firmly on the map of mankind's greatest achievements around the globe.

Just four days earlier, on July 16, 1969, Apollo 11 had punched its way off Launch Pad 39A at the KSC, en route to the moon with a crew of Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Edwin "Buzz" E. Aldrin, creating a lasting legacy for the home of "one giant leap for mankind."

And the Apollo 11 legacy will be front at center at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex all this year, showcasing that ultra-dramatic moment in time with a series of new exhibits, enhancements and special events to underline the scintillating feats of Armstrong and company.

It will all go under the title of The Year of Apollo and be highlighted by a complete re-working of the Apollo/Saturn V Center, which is one of the main stops on the Space Center tour and explores the wonders of the 12-year program from the days leading up to the first launch to the six moon launches that followed.

There also will be a remodeled "sense of arrival" that will include revamped landscaping, thematic signage and more, setting a new tone for the experience. The focal point of the Apollo/Saturn V Center – the truly mind-boggling Saturn V moon rocket (one of only three remaining in the world and still, to this day, the most powerful rocket ever built) – will have the addition of projection mapping along its side, showing the iconic footage of the Moon landing on the rocket that enabled the journey.

Then, at the entrance to the Lunar



A statue of Allan Shepard stands in the new Heroes and Legends building. Shepard was the first American in space.

Theater, guests will be transported back to 1969 as they step into a period living room recreation to experience what it was like to actually watch the Moon landing on that memorable July day. A 1960s style bar recreation, where patrons gathered to watch the historic event, will be another part of the revamped entrance.

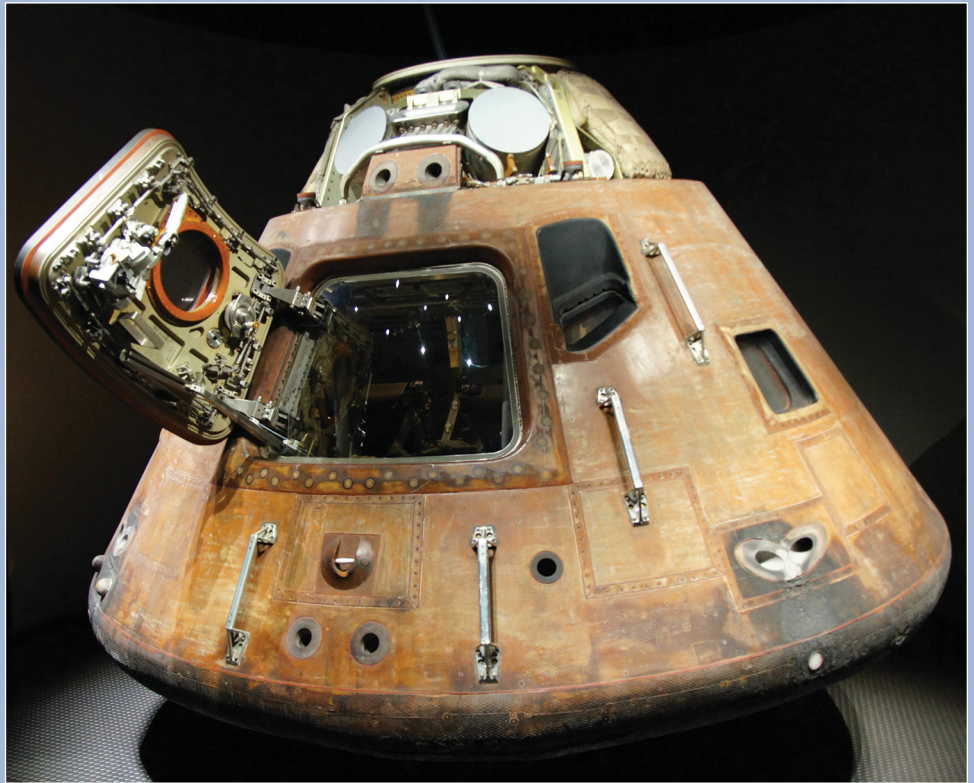
The Astrovan, which transported astronauts to the launch pad – and which was used in the recent hit movie "First Man" – will also be on display at the Apollo/Saturn V Center.

It all amounts to an impressive array of enhancements and celebrations, and a well-deserved tribute to the men and women of the Apollo program, who labored through a heart-breaking series of trials, tribulations and setbacks to finally set the crew on their astounding lunar course.

Howard Schwartz, the KSC's senior



Visitors are totally immersed in the world of the Apollo program at the Apollo/Saturn V Center, with a chance to peer inside the Command Module, right, and appreciate the amazing Saturn V Rocket itself, below.







The Year of Apollo will be celebrated most notably at the Apollo/Saturn V Center on the main Bus Tour, and one of the highlights will be a special projection mapping video on the side of the Saturn V rocket.

director marketing and sales, explained the thinking behind the Year of Apollo: "The date of July 16, 1969, is very significant for the Kennedy Space Center because that was when everything started. Every mission to the moon launched from here and obviously the date of July 20, the actual moon landing, is very important, but it all started with that Apollo 11 launch, and we have a full year of activities to celebrate it.

"We actually started it off this January with the creation of the special 50th anniversary coin with the U.S. Mint, and we will have other specific exhibits and attractions throughout the year. It will culminate in July with a series of events aimed at celebrating the launch and the first moon walk.

"We will be completely re-doing our Apollo/Saturn V Center from top to bottom, creating interactive exhibits and

enhancing the technology to really tell the story of the missions in a whole new way. We wanted to make sure we're keeping up with trends in society and technology, with things like projection mapping of the moon landing on the side of the Saturn V rocket itself, which helps us to tell the story in a more creative way."

Some of the new exhibits will offer a chance to explore lesser-known aspects of the Apollo program. Schwartz added,



"The Fisher Pen showcase will illustrate exactly the famous pen that was used on all the missions and then, outside, we'll be creating a fabulous Moon Tree garden that will take the seedlings of trees that were on various missions and will now be exhibited in their own setting for people to walk through."

Come July, the Visitor Complex will be home to an array of speakers and astronauts from the period, as well as a nighttime VIP reception during the anniversary week. In partnership with the Space Coast office of tourism and Astronaut Fellowship Foundation, there will be one-off concerts and a parade to support the anniversary that ties into the local community.

Even more importantly, this year's anniversary will be a springboard into a whole new era of space exploration. "One of the key things the Visitor Complex is here to do is help to tell the whole NASA story, and that means missions to go back to the Moon and to go to Mars," Schwartz added. "While we celebrate the past, we want to create excitement for the future of space exploration.

"Our NASA Now exhibit talks about that future and the partnerships there now are with SpaceX, the United Launch Alliance, Boeing and others, with the purpose of being able to explore space in ways that haven't been done before, like with reusable rockets. It is very exciting to be a part of this period whereby in 2020, we should have Americans going back into space from American soil, right here at the Kennedy Space Center."

However, this year's Apollo focus is only a small part of today's Visitor Complex. In fact, to borrow an oft-used phrase, if you haven't seen KSC lately, you haven't seen KSC. Operational company Delaware North, which covers a broad portfolio of entertainment specialties – including national parks and sports stadiums – actually manages the overall running of the Center under a concessionaire contract from NASA, and have spent



One of KSC's central attractions is the presentation for Space Shuttle Atlantis, which was retired in 2011 and now resides in a purpose-designed showcase.



Visitors to KSC can also re-live the exact moment the Apollo 11 Lunar Lander touched down on the surface of the moon, with the full drama and excitement of that historic day in world history.



more than \$120 million in the past six years on revamping the whole Visitor Complex.

No longer is this a place of static exhibits and leisurely bus tours. Instead, in keeping with Florida's dynamic array of theme parks and other attractions, this is a modern, hands-on entertainment center that deals very much with the who, why and how of the space program in its entirety, a riveting interactive education into the Right Stuff, with a notable accent on the people involved.

Just to start with, the Bus Tours are still a KSC staple, but now they run on a much more pro-active basis, with "space gal" and TV host Emily Calandrelli leading the way. They provide a dynamic close-up look at essential parts of the Space Center, such as the gigantic Vehicle Assembly Building and the historic Launch Complex 39.

They also include an extended stop at the Apollo/Saturn V Center, where visitors can enjoy the full experience of re-living that 1969 highlight of the first moon landing. You can tour at your own pace and soak up the Year of Apollo exhibits before catching the bus back to the main Visitor Complex. How long do you need? Well, that's completely up to you. Most guests need one to two hours here, so plan accordingly.

Back at the Visitor Complex, the two IMAX cinemas remain a big draw in every sense, showcasing two current movie stunners, "Journey To Space", narrated by Sir Patrick Stewart and highlighting NASA's past accomplishments and future plans, and a Jennifer Lawrence showpiece in the form of "A Beautiful Planet", in which the award-winning actress relates the story of Earth as seen

from the International Space Station. Both films reveal a space view that is astounding to behold and awe-inspiring in the sense of achievement they represent.

From there, the next stop should definitely be the Space Shuttle Atlantis, the showcase for one of the three surviving shuttles from the 30-year shuttle program. This huge exhibit incorporates the Space Shuttle Experience ride as well as an extensive series of hands-on activities and four multimedia cinematic productions, highlighted by a grand reveal that is truly epic in its scope. We challenge anyone not to be just a little teary-eyed at the curtain-up moment, while the recent addition of a special memorial to the two Shuttle crews killed in the tragedies of 1986 and 2003 is a moment of reflection.

New (in late 2016) was the Heroes & Legends zone, another impressive – and



The entrance plaza to NASA's Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex now includes a special memorial fountain dedicated to President John F. Kennedy and his famous challenge for the conquest of space.



immersive – platform of astronaut achievement, putting a highly personal spin on the men and women of America’s inaugural space efforts. It asks the question, “What does it take to be a hero?”, and answers it through the lives of those space pioneers. The U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame, which used to be in a separate showcase in nearby Titusville, is now incorporated into the same building, and ensures a comprehensive look at the human side of the space race.

Another must-see exhibit is Journey to Mars, a hands-on chance to explore the

future of NASA’s ambitions in our solar system and beyond. This multimedia center includes a live presentation, and highlights what’s happening at the home of U.S. space exploration right now. Test your deep space savvy with interactive games and simulators and explore mock-ups of Mars rovers. You can also sign up for Cosmic Quest, a unique live-action gaming experience (for an additional fee) that challenges you to launch a rocket, build a Mars habitat, perform experiments aboard the International Space Station and redirect an Earth-threatening asteroid!

The Universe Theater is a multi-use venue for several other attention-grabbing shows, including the daily “Astronaut Encounter”, whereby commanders, pilots and mission and payload specialists who have lived and worked in space share their experiences during a presentation and Q&A session. If you have ever wanted to ask an astronaut how they view our planet from space, this is the place to come.

The Apollo program isn’t the only thing being celebrated at the KSC this year, though, and visitors should take note of an addition to The Rocket Garden, where United Launch Alliance’s Delta II rocket will be honored with a place in this high-powered “hall of fame.”

Finally, all visitors to NASA’s showpiece center should be on the lookout for the grand return of human spaceflight at Cape Canaveral. After nearly seven years, it is time for a new era of space exploration when astronauts will once again launch into space from America itself.

### More Enhancements

- An enhanced Touch the Moon exhibit
- A Moon Tree garden
- Fisher Space Pen Legacy display
- A closer look at the Command and Service Module
- A photomosaic display with interactive elements
- More artifacts on display
- Renovation of existing exhibit displays
- All-new content and audio-visual

### SPACE CENTER INFO

**Where:** Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex, Space Commerce Way, Merritt Island, FL 32953.

**Admission:** \$57 adults, \$50 seniors, \$47 children (3-11); Military Service discounts \$50 and \$41. Annual pass (including free parking) \$96 and \$78.

**Parking:** \$10.

**Hours:** 9 a.m. to 6 or 7 p.m. seasonally.

**Contact:** 1-855-433-4210; kennedyspacecenter.com

NASA’s Commercial Crew Program is producing the next generation of spacecraft to send astronauts to the International Space Station (and beyond) from the Space Center, and this should be a crowning achievement in the best traditions of Armstrong’s famous phrase.

Delaware North and the Visitor Complex won’t stop there, though, as Schwartz hinted at more to come in future. “We have been re-imagining our Complex throughout the last few years, looking forward to the return of manned missions. Then, in 2020, we will have a series of new attractions that are going to appeal to kids and adults alike, which we’ll be unveiling later this year. There’s a lot to look forward to.”

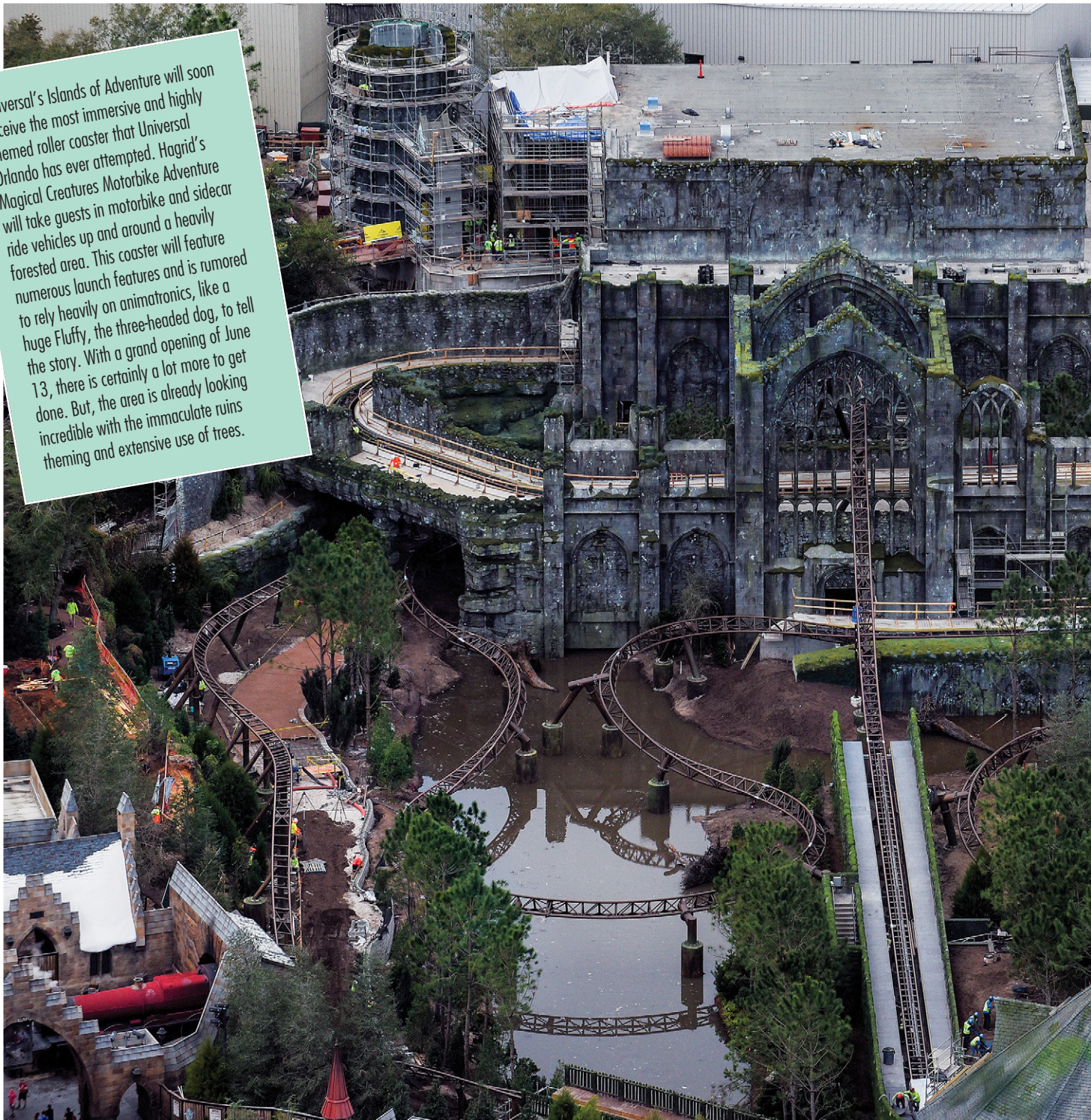


To mark the anniversary of the moon landing, the U.S. mint has issued several commemorative coins, notably a silver dollar and \$5 gold coin.



# Update From Above

Universal's Islands of Adventure will soon receive the most immersive and highly themed roller coaster that Universal Orlando has ever attempted. Hagrid's Magical Creatures Motorbike Adventure will take guests in motorbike and sidecar ride vehicles up and around a heavily forested area. This coaster will feature numerous launch features and is rumored to rely heavily on animatronics, like a huge Fluffy, the three-headed dog, to tell the story. With a grand opening of June 13, there is certainly a lot more to get done. But, the area is already looking incredible with the immaculate ruins theming and extensive use of trees.





# Orlando: A True Progress City

By Tharin White

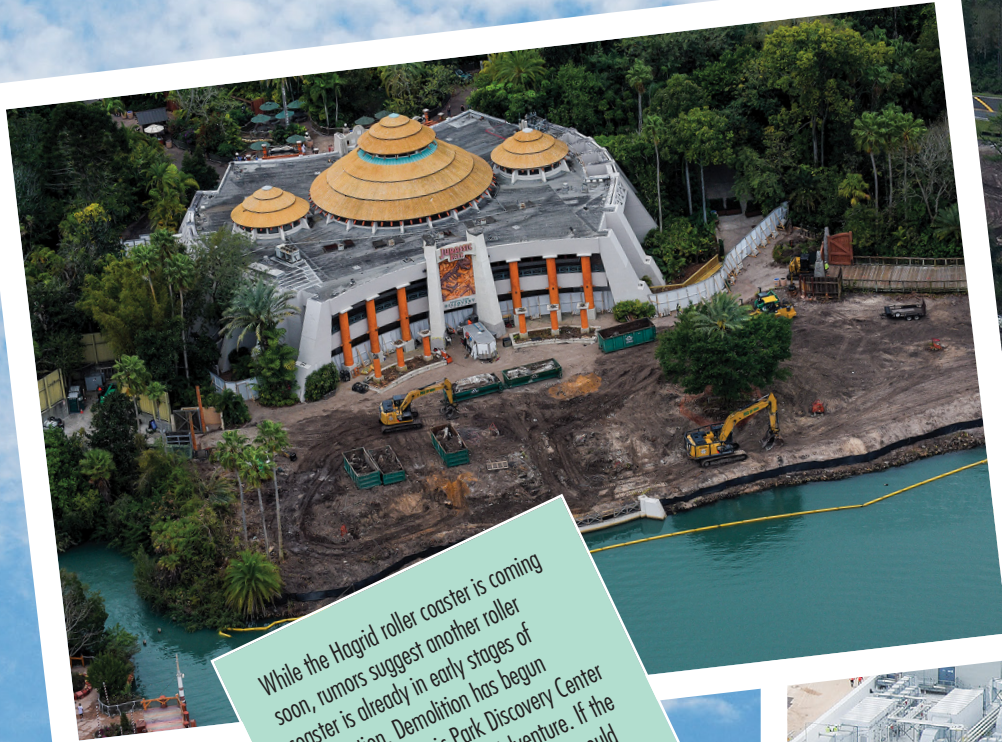
PHOTOS BY JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ / SUBLIME IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY  
FLIGHT COURTESY OF AIR FORCE FUN

**T**his year is prepped to be one of the largest for grand openings in Walt Disney World's and Universal Orlando's history! Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge and Hagrid's Magical Creatures Motorbike Adventure roller coaster will open to tens of thousands. We took to the sky to see how much has progressed since our Update from Above article last year.



The upcoming Disney Vacation Club resort, Disney's Riviera Resort, will be designed after the architecture of the early 1900s in Europe. This will be the 15th Disney Vacation Club resort and will feature rooftop dining with views of Epcot and Disney's Hollywood Studios.



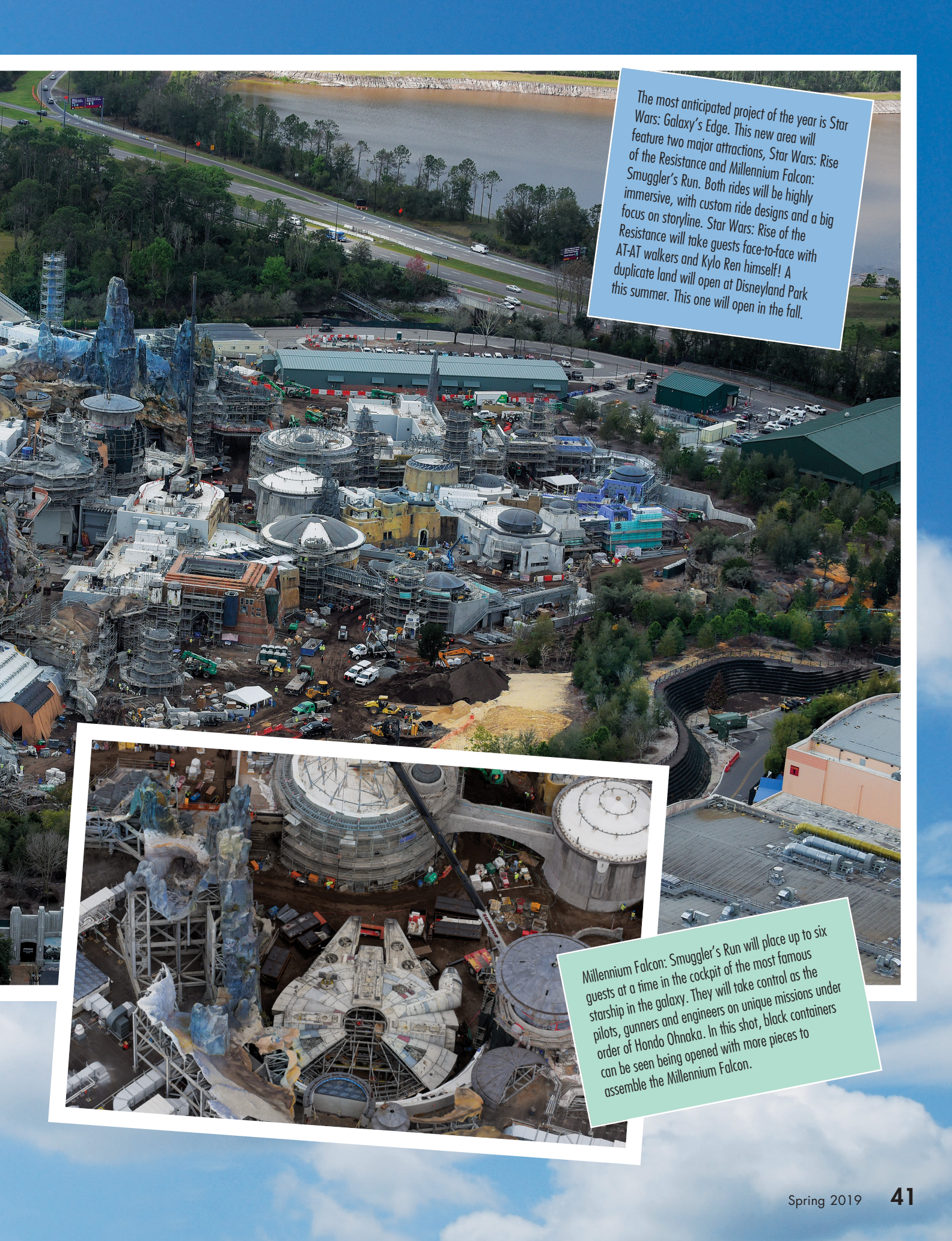


While the Hagrid roller coaster is coming soon, rumors suggest another roller coaster is already in early stages of construction. Demolition has begun around the Jurassic Park Discovery Center at Universal's Islands of Adventure. If the rumors are true, this new coaster would be the fastest at Universal Orlando and would feature sharp turns, significant drops and a theme based on raptors.




Across the street, Universal is moving quickly on the completion of their Endless Summer Resort. Half of the resort, Surfside Inn and Suites, will be completed this August, with the other half, Dockside Inn and Suites, opening next year. This resort will feature the most affordable rooms on Universal Orlando property, with certain selections around \$90 a night.



An aerial photograph of the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge construction site at Disneyland Park. The image shows a large area of land with various structures under construction, including several circular domes and a large, complex structure on the left. A road and a body of water are visible in the background. A blue text box is overlaid on the top right of the image.

The most anticipated project of the year is Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. This new area will feature two major attractions, Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance and Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run. Both rides will be highly immersive, with custom ride designs and a big focus on storyline. Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance will take guests face-to-face with AT-AT walkers and Kylo Ren himself! A duplicate land will open at Disneyland Park this summer. This one will open in the fall.

A close-up aerial photograph of the Millennium Falcon construction site. The image shows the large, circular structure of the ship's cockpit, with various scaffolding and construction equipment visible. A crane is positioned near the structure. A green text box is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run will place up to six guests at a time in the cockpit of the most famous starship in the galaxy. They will take control as the pilots, gunners and engineers on unique missions under the order of Hondo Ohnaka. In this shot, black containers can be seen being opened with more pieces to assemble the Millennium Falcon.





The main hub of the Disney Skyliner station will be located at Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort. As seen here, hundreds of themed gondolas will take guests between Epcot, Riviera Resort, Disney's Hollywood Studios, Caribbean Beach Resort, Art of Animation Resort and Pop Century Resort. This new transportation option should be available to guests this fall.

Over at the Magic Kingdom, work has made it past demolition and into the first steps of construction to bring Tron Lightcycle: Power Run to Tomorrowland. The Tomorrowland Speedway will be down for an extended period, as part of its land must be used for supports for the Tron coaster.

PHOTO BY @BIORECONSTRUCT ON TWITTER



Disney's Coronado Springs Resort is still in the process of adding their new Gran Destino Tower. Upon completion, this new centerpiece for the resort will add 545 new guest rooms, an expanded lobby and a rooftop dining experience with sweeping views of Walt Disney World. The other construction, located in the center of the lake, will be Lago Dorado, a new restaurant and convergence area for easy access throughout the resort.



Another far off project is the heavily rumored fourth theme park for Universal Orlando Resort. Leaked team member documents and anonymous tips have all but confirmed this new park and its rumored name, Universal's Fantastic Worlds. It's located off of Universal Boulevard, near the Orange County Convention Center. As you can see, so far Universal has just been grading and flattening the land.



At Epcot, construction has flown by on the upcoming Guardians of the Galaxy roller coaster and a space-themed restaurant near Mission: Space. The space restaurant's curved wall can be seen in the center left, near Test Track. A massive projection screen will be used to simulate guests being aboard a space station. Whereas in the background, Disney has been working around-the-clock on the Guardians of the Galaxy roller coaster. The massive show building is so large that Disney claims three Spaceship Earths could fit inside. Also, recently announced, a new Play Pavilion will be taking over the old Wonders of Life pavilion, the golden-domed structure to the left of the Guardians construction.



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# 'Kingdom Hearts III' channels The Most-Magical Place on Earth



Cooking with Remy isn't Sora's only special skill in "Kingdom Hearts III".



Favorite Disney friends and foes face off in long-awaited sequel's sprawling story.



# Square Enix Co-Director Tai Yasue Talks Fighting Foes with Favorite Disney Attractions

By Matt Cabral

**W**ith its 2002 debut, the Kingdom Hearts series offered fans a magical mash-up of Disney characters and worlds, crossed with elements from video game studio Square Enix's Final Fantasy franchise. Over the past 15-plus years – and more spin-offs, sorta sequels and side-stories than you can shake a Keyblade at – the series has continued to cater to the Disney-adoring crowd.

With the long-awaited “Kingdom Hearts III”, however, it seems the acclaimed Japanese studio is actually doubling down on the Disney fan-service, including more familiar faces and places than ever. Spiky-haired protagonist Sora is once again joined by Mickey, Donald and Goofy, but according to Co-Director Tai Yasue, those character appearances barely scratch the surface of the game's sprawling cast. “With all the familiar Disney and Pixar worlds the player will explore, they'll run into many characters they already know and love, such as Woody, Buzz, Baymax, Elsa and Captain Jack Sparrow, to name a few.”

Dozens more of Mickey's friends – from classics, like Clarabelle Cow, to contemporary favorites, such as Wreck-It

Ralph – join the aforementioned cast, but it's the game's many film-based worlds driving the narrative that brings them all together. “Sora, Donald, and Goofy join forces to overcome the Heartless invasion as it spreads throughout the Disney and Pixar worlds, including Frozen, Toy Story, Monsters, Inc., Big Hero 6, Tangled, Hercules, Pirates of the Caribbean and beyond,” explained Yasue. “Each world brings players new adventures, a diverse cast of characters to interact with, and a unique set of challenges to overcome.”

## THEME PARK POWERS

Those challenges not only include run-of-the-mill Heartless minions, but epic boss encounters against familiar foes – from Davy Jones to Mother Gothel – that can't be defeated with a few simple swipes of Sora's signature Keyblade.

Thankfully, “Kingdom Hearts III” introduces the “Attractions” system, a villain-vanquishing power that also happens to be the game's absolute coolest call-out to Disney parks. Essentially, the ability allows Sora to unleash a powerful attack by summoning and boarding rides based on popular attractions from the Magic Kingdom and other parks.

Depending on which world you're in, and what screen-filling foe you're fighting, you're able to conjure a ride by selecting a command and magically calling it into battle (no FastPass required!) Once boarded, the attraction will wreak all kinds of havoc, leaving vibrant destruction and a cinematic display of eye-popping effects in its wake. The roller coaster-themed ride – which will be immediately familiar to fans of Big Thunder Mountain – for example, shoots enemy-pelting fire-



Buzz Lightyear would approve of Donald and Sora's laser-blasting strategy.



"Kingdom Hearts III"'s attraction-inspired powers wouldn't look out of place in the Main Street Electrical Parade.

works from its chimney, while a pyrotechnics display that wouldn't look out of place high above Cinderella Castle fills the sky.

Blaster Blaze, a loving tribute to Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters, packs a similar punch, as it shifts the action to a first-person perspective before putting players behind the ride's laser cannon. According to Yasue, it was integral that he and his team nail the delicate balance between making the attraction's powerful abilities, while also remaining authentic to their theme park inspirations. "The main challenge was to re-imagine each attraction into a gameplay feature that would be useful, fun and distinct, without sacrificing what we originally loved about it; we wanted to create something distinct to Kingdom Hearts, but was also a quintessential Disney experience, arranged in a way that would be fun to use in battle."

## FAN-PLEASING PRESENTATION

Using the Grizzly River Run-like raft ride as an example, Yasue explained how the attractions don't just deliver serious damage to the game's enemies, but also recapture the magic of riding them. "In the water ride, when you do your final move, we made sure you can dive down a steep slope, splash your surroundings and get extra soaked." Of course, some rides make for a more natural foe-thwarting fit; both the carousel and tea cups – based on the Fantasyland favorites – do a

great job mowing down menacing minions by simply moving as they would if you were riding them.

Whether cutting a swath through hordes of Heartless from a spinning tea cup or taking down a towering Hercules Titan from behind the controls of a runaway locomotive from Big Thunder Mountain Railroad, you'll notice all the attractions are brought to life by "thousands of sparkling lights." This is no mistake, as the special powers are also heavily inspired by the Main Street Electrical Parade. "One of the things we focused on at the beginning of development, was to create a unique next-generation look, with vivid colors and magical special effects," continued Yasue. "Bringing the design essence of the Main Street Electrical Parade visually captured what we were trying to do in a way that everyone could understand instantaneously."

## MAKING MAGIC

Disney characters and worlds have always been a staple of the Kingdom Hearts series, but fans were elated when Square Enix announced the third entry's narrative and gameplay would evolve to include park-inspired content. According to Yasue though, the addition was as much about making the studio's passionate team happy as it was pleasing the fans.

"Our development team loves all things Disney, and we all have fond memories of going to the Disney parks, so coming up with ideas for rides such as the carousel, water ride, blaster ride, spinning tea cups and swinging pirate ship was a blast."

While feeding their own fandom no doubt made for a rewarding development cycle though, crafting a feature that both drives the combat system and stays true to the game's ambitious, authentic visual presentation is no walk in the park. "We wanted to make sure the rides had universal appeal, so we had weekly meetings with over 30 developers to discuss our opinions on game design and graphics, adjusting each ride until we felt we really nailed it," explained Yasue. "Game Director Tetsuya Nomura came up with the concept, while I did the game design for the various rides, and the art team handled the artwork; from there, we had a team of 3D artists, animators, engineers and special effects artists working to implement the concept into the game."

Whether you've patiently waited a decade-plus for "Kingdom Hearts III"'s arrival or you're a Disney theme park enthusiast looking for a fresh way to experience your favorite attractions, Sora's long-awaited return is a magical, fan-servicing journey for players of all stripes.



Looks like some guests forgot to keep their hands and feet inside the vehicle at all times.





Spinning tea cups are perfect for attacking swarms of persistent enemies.



When not unleashing attractions on bad guys, you may just want to ride them for fun.



The new Attractions power-ups double-down on the series' Disney fan service.

## Attractions

The new command system allows Sora to use elaborate attacks against enemies using various rides from the Disney parks, particularly Disneyland park. There are six different attacks players can use randomly throughout the game:

- Pirate Ship — looks like the Sailing Ship Columbia
- Mountain Coaster — looks like Big Thunder Mountain Railroad
- Mad Tea Cups — looks like Mad Tea Party
- Blaster Blaze — looks like Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters
- Splash Run — looks like Grizzly River Run
- Magic Carousel — looks like King Arthur Carrousel

## Kingdom Hearts III's Hidden (Mickey) Surprise

While the Attractions system alone should be enough to draw Disney theme park enthusiasts into Kingdom Hearts III's charming universe — regardless of their previous experience with the series — Yasue and his team tucked a few other park-inspired surprises into the game. "We have Hidden Mickey symbols! We've placed them in the craziest places. By taking pictures of the symbols with your in-game camera, you'll be able to get various items and rewards. I don't think a lot of people know about this, but there are 90 of them to commemorate Mickey's anniversary."

When not capturing photographic evidence of every last Hidden Mickey you come across, the in-game camera can also be used to take selfies. The game's intuitive photo mode allows Sora to snap pics of himself alongside iconic characters, familiar landmarks, and cool Easter Eggs. On top of filling up a fun gallery of your adventures, the system also grants special bonuses for photographing some mission-specific items.



By Matt and Jackie Roseboom

# Stay and Live at the Margaritaville Resort Orlando



The 300-plus acres which used to be the home of Splendid China theme park and more, is now the home of Margaritaville Resort Orlando.



The colorful cottages in the back of the resort can be rented or bought. Or you can buy one and rent it out when you're not using it.



**M**argaritaville Resort Orlando isn't just a hotel, it's also a shopping center, water park and a housing development. Now you can waste away again at Margaritaville - permanently.

The recently opened 300-plus-acre resort is still growing. The hotel is fully open, but at the time of this writing, their spa, many of the stores at the Sunset Walk shopping center, Island H2O Live! full-size water park and more cottages are coming later this year.

If you've been to other Margaritaville hotels, you may be surprised by the luxury and size of the lobby. There are lots of beautiful, comfortable seating areas, high ceilings decorated with hanging margarita glasses, and other decorations to put you in the tropical mood - including a large flip-flop and pop top sculpture from Jimmy Buffett's "Margaritaville" song lyrics. There's a gift shop, bar, restaurant and grab and go locations just off the lobby. Down one set of stairs is a large convention area, ready for business meetings and wedding receptions. Down another set of stairs is a restaurant and doors out to the pools. You may also experience live





The large lobby has lots of comfortable seating areas and margarita glasses hanging from the ceiling.



Euphoria is the name of their more upscale restaurant, but it's Margaritaville, there's no need to dress up unless you want to. The open kitchen restaurant features inside and outdoor seating.



Visit our website or YouTube channel and search Margaritaville Resort Orlando to see all of our videos from the resort, including an entire episode of "The Attractions Show" from the resort.

island music, island dancers or fun stilt walkers in the lobby.

Just beyond the lobby bar is their upscale restaurant called Euphoria. It's open in the evenings for romantic, but still casual, dinners. Downstairs is the more family-friendly restaurant known as On Vacation. It's open for all three meals and offers a breakfast buffet as well as menu ordering. But it wouldn't be Margaritaville without at least a couple of bars, and the second one, Salty Rim, is poolside and also offers hot food selections for your cheeseburger in paradise.

Speaking of pools, Margaritaville has three large ones. The two largest are next to each other behind the hotel and the quieter one is around the side of the hotel. The lagoon pool is where you'll find the Salty Rim Bar & Grill, beach chairs in the sand and cabanas for rent. The resort also has St. Somewhere Spa with a Himalayan sea salt room, a fitness room and Parakeets Kid's and Teen Club.

The rooms are spacious and full of amenities. Think of any really nice hotel room and this is it and more. Each room features a private balcony and view of one of the pools. The decor of the rooms, as well as the whole resort, is tropical, of course. You'll get all the amenities you'd expect plus bathrobes, a rainhead shower, Keurig coffeemaker, minibar, complimentary bottled water and free wi-fi. You'll also find a tablet computer bedside that lets you order extra amenities.

If you'd like to stay and enjoy the pools, or have a late flight, you can check your bags. The hotel encourages you to enjoy the pools and resort all day. The lobby restrooms include full showers, so you can freshen up before you go.

In addition to the shops and restaurants in Margaritaville's Sunset Walk shopping center, there's another shopping center with a Target (with Starbucks



PHOTO BY CI WALKER

If you're from the islands, you'll feel right at home in the guest rooms. Each room has a private balcony overlooking one of the pools.



It's not exactly a real beach, but Margaritaville's main pool area will allow you to put your toes in the sand.



## MARGARITAVILLE RESORT ORLANDO

**Location:** 8000 Fins Up Circle, Kissimmee, FL.  
**Prices:** \$179 to \$349 per standard room  
**Resort Fee:** Yes  
**Parking:** \$10 per day  
**Phone:** 407-479-0950  
**Website:** margaritavilleresortorlando.com

inside) right next door. The resort is right in the heart of the U.S. 192 tourist district, next door to Walt Disney World. They offer free transportation to all of Orlando's theme parks.

In addition to the hotel rooms, you can also opt to stay in one of the one- to eight-bedroom cottages behind the hotel. So if you fall in love with the resort, you don't have to leave, as these cottages are also for sale!



By Susan & Simon Veness

# Disney Springs' New Puck is a Californian Classic



The exterior of the new Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill is bright and welcoming, with a high barn-like roof line to give it a convivial Austrian vibe.





While there is plenty of gourmet fare on offer, Puck's also offers classic comfort food with the WP Burger.



Inside the restaurant, there are several different areas. This is the main dining room and an open kitchen in the back.



Back in 1997, a brand new area of Walt Disney World opened with a brand new restaurant from one of the hottest restaurateurs in America. It marked the debut of Downtown Disney's West Side expansion, including Wolfgang Puck's Grand Café among a welter of other new openings in the former Disney Village Marketplace.

Fast forward 22 years and Downtown Disney has changed again. Another expansion area has been added. And, right in the middle sits a new Wolfgang Puck creation. It's funny how circular life can be.

Of course, Disney Springs is now the proper name for this vastly enlarged area of shops, dining and entertainment. Instead of three sections, it now has four, including the novel Town Center district. And here, last November, the Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill became the latest addition to the glittering array of restaurants that have helped to boost this growth.

For anyone who needs a quick refresher, Puck is the Austrian-born, California-honed chef who began his trail blazing restaurant career with Spago in Los Angeles, the first in a country-wide series

of imaginative venues that have showcased his passion for new American cuisine from creative European roots.

The new Bar & Grill may just be the pinnacle of that culinary evolution, and it should be high on the list for all foodie-centric visitors to Disney Springs this year. It may not represent the most advanced menu he and his team have yet created (that honor probably goes to the Michelin-starred Spago in Beverly Hills), but it could well be the most accessible, the most inviting and the most downright enjoyable.

Our recent visit coincided with a beautifully clear – if chilly – Florida afternoon, where a seat in the “big front window” backing on to the huge pizza oven created the perfect warm ambience for a laid-back tasting session, watching the (Disney) world go by and grazing on a mix of lunch and dinner items arranged by Executive Chef Michael Tiva and General Manager Sarah Leacock.

And, if ever there was a menu to encourage some indolent grazing, this is it. There are no giant portions to overwhelm the plate, no over-elaborate pre-





Those looking for a great sampler taste of the Puck style should order the Artisanal Salumi plate.



Executive Chef Michael Tiva is thrilled with the set up and kitchen facilities of the new restaurant, especially the signature pizza oven.



Dessert is also as good as it looks!

sensation that makes you wonder what you're eating, and no feeling that you need to hurry what you're doing in this semi-rustic setting of steel, glass and wood that is based (roughly) on an Austrian farmhouse of Puck's youth.

Just to start with, the cocktail and wine list is a thing of palate-pleasing splendor. All the syrups and other special ingredients for the hand-crafted cocktails are made in-house. Nothing is outsourced in beverage-land, and it shows in creations like Pins & Needles – a beautifully bright and refreshing blend of Tanqueray Gin, rosemary and Japanese cucumber – and the superb Devil In Disguise, where the combo of Cazadores Reposado Tequila, Cointreau, passionfruit syrup and chili reveals itself

in a gorgeous succession of complex layers that deliver a powerful, spicy finish.

When it comes to the appetizers, there is a traditional line-up – including succulent Whole Wood-Grilled Shrimp and Local Burrata (a magnificent melt-in-the-mouth sensation, with baby carrots, romesco sauce and walnuts) – and a series of sharing dishes that offer a fresh charcuterie board, roasted meatballs, house-made focaccia bread and a divine Bruschetta, another Puck original with torn mozzarella and a pesto aioli that gives the whole dish a gooey-chewy consistency that lingers long on the tastebuds.

PS: Our tip is to save some of the Burrata to enjoy with the next course, which makes for a truly heavenly combination.

The next course is a mouthwatering choice of pizzas, including the Smoked Salmon version that initially made Puck famous in L.A. circles, notably at the annual Oscars' Governors Ball. Served on that perfectly-cooked super-thin pizza dough that has just the right amount of crunch to it, brushed with a light butter wash, and with the in-house smoked salmon underlain by a super-smooth dill cream, this is the kind of dish that would keep an army marching for days just at the thought of it.

It also serves to underline Puck's essential culinary ethos of taking big, bold, but complex flavors and giving them a surprising twist, never being afraid to experiment, even with a tried and tested formula.

Chef Tiva explained, "Wolf literally calls me every day and he's already been here more than half a dozen times. He's very invested in all his properties, and he pushes all of us extremely hard. Once we're doing one thing, it's always a case of 'What's new? What's next? You've got to cook me something I've never had before!' It's always a challenge, but I'm definitely up for it.

"This is the menu right now, but there is always a demand for something new, more experimentation. We had all our pizzas that we'd initially decided on when we first opened, but then he came out and, when I walked out to the [pizza] station, and there were literally eight new pizzas waiting there, and I was like 'OK!' He's always thinking about it and always trying to improve and innovate, and hopefully that shows in what we all do here."

After the thin-crust deliciousness of the pizzas, your next decision is over an array of pastas and entrees that may sound familiar, but which come with an extra layer of locally-sourced flavor (notably fresh-made pastas with eggs from Lake Meadow Farm in nearby Ocoee, while the burrata comes from a Winter Garden vendor) and a genuine flair for the different.

The Grilled Sea Bass is an Italian original (Puck himself remains hugely influenced by Italy's culture and cuisines) and benefits from a shaved fennel salad, peperonata sauce and grilled lemon, with the addition of Kalamata olives that add real kick to the smooth fleshiness of the fish.





Another specialty appetizer is Puck's Whole Wood-Grilled Shrimp, which features two head-on jumbo Gulf shrimp sitting on a white bean ragu, with nduja breadcrumbs and garlic toast to complete the genuine flavor sensation.

Finally, there are the desserts and, once again, it is clear to see the familiar-but-never-ordinary ethos at work here. The Key Lime Pie is big, bold but perfectly balanced; the Chocolate Lava Cake is enhanced by candied almonds and cherries; and the eye-catching Apple Pie Sundae is a literal deconstructed apple pie, served in a sundae glass with spiced apples, maple pecans and a salted caramel gelato.

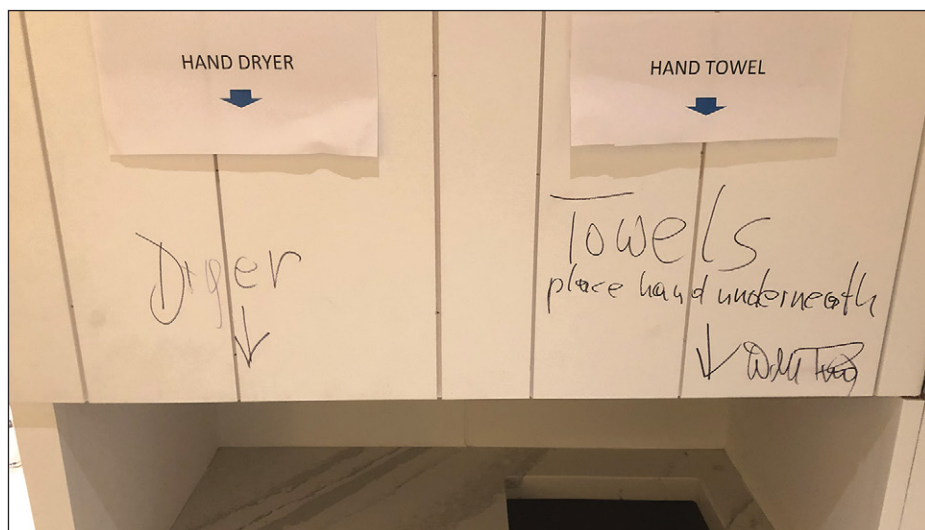
Gelato is, in fact, another specialty, with a Pensacola-based company shipping in supplies on a weekly basis. In fact, if you just stop by the outdoor

servery (another clever innovation that improves on the old Grand Café), you can grab a quick-serve snapshot of what's on offer inside, thanks to the gorgeous array of gelatos, assorted toppings, pastries and specialty drinks (don't miss the Classic Affogato or Tiramisu Shakerato for an ice cream sensation).

But that would be to deny yourself the opportunity to graze on the Bruschetta and sample the salmon pizza, among others. And that would just be wrong.



And then there's that wonderful pizza oven, turning out a series of classic Italian-style pies.



You can't say Wolfgang Puck himself isn't hands-on at his restaurants. When the Bar & Grill first opened, Puck wrote these notes right on the wall in the men's room, indicating they need to add some signs.

## WOLFGANG PUCK BAR & GRILL

**Location:** Disney Springs, Town Center

### PRICE RANGE:

**Appetizers:** \$5 to \$27  
**Entrees:** \$16 to \$49  
**Sides:** \$8 to \$10  
**Desserts:** \$6 to \$10

**Phone:** 407-815-2100

**Website:** [wolfgangpuck.com/dining/orlando-bar-grill](http://wolfgangpuck.com/dining/orlando-bar-grill)

**Hours:** 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

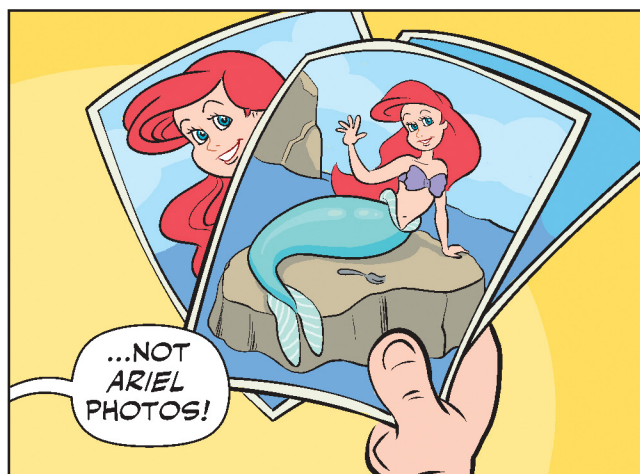
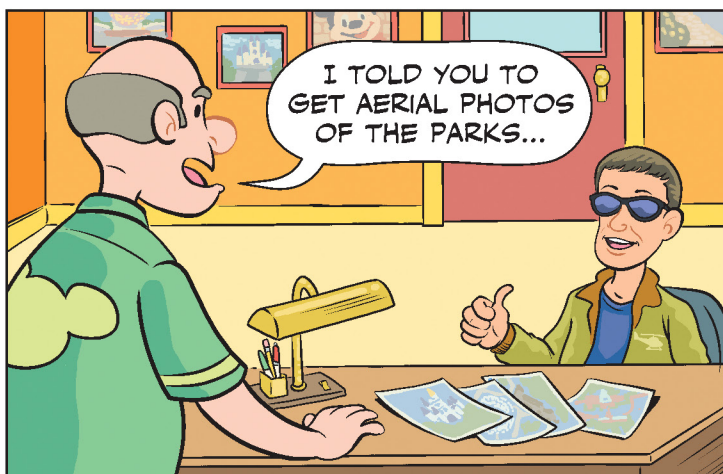
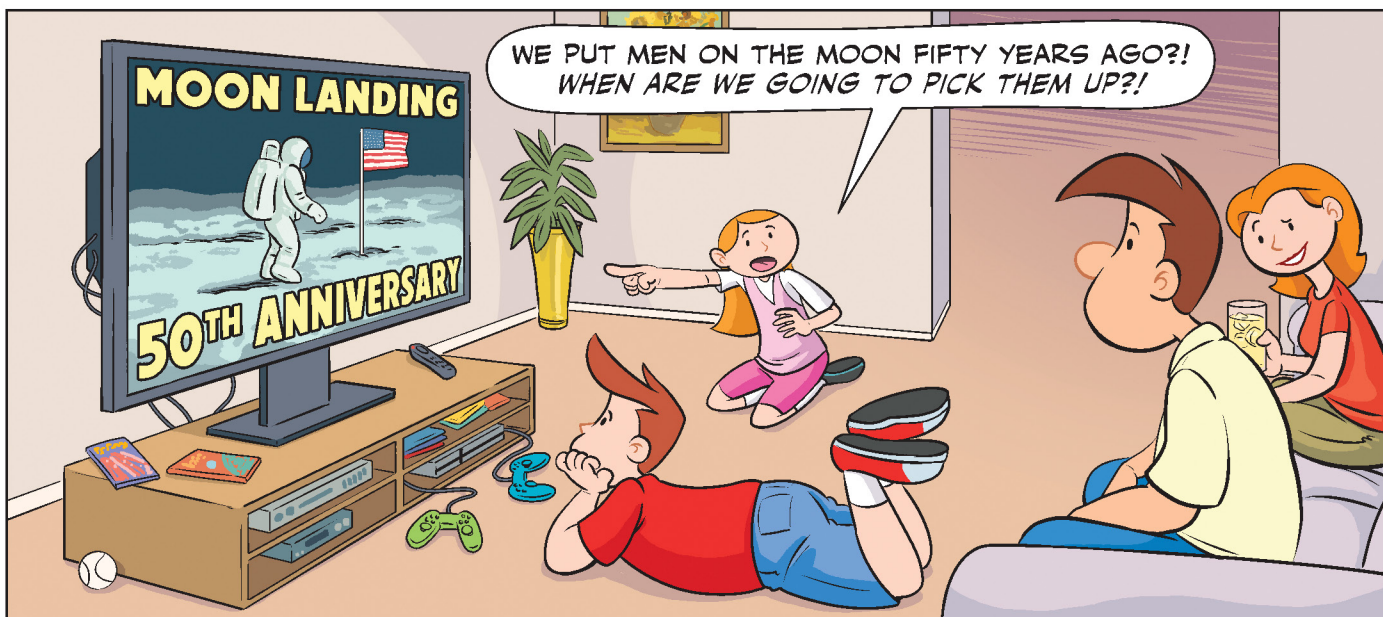
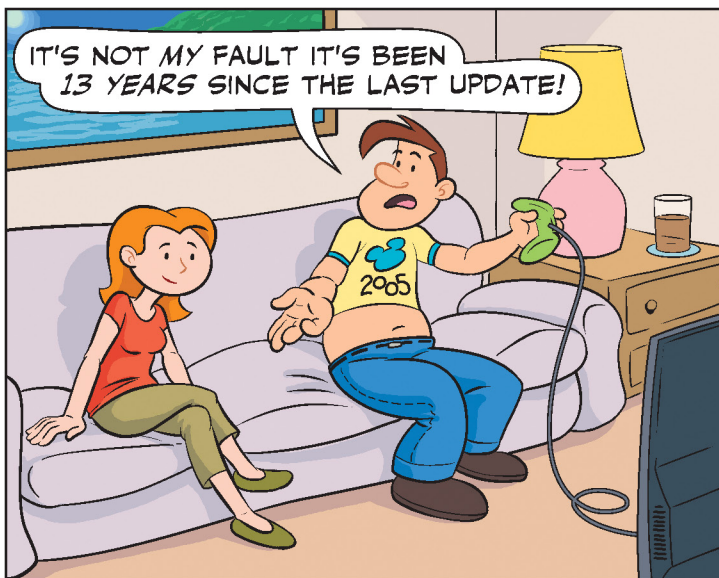
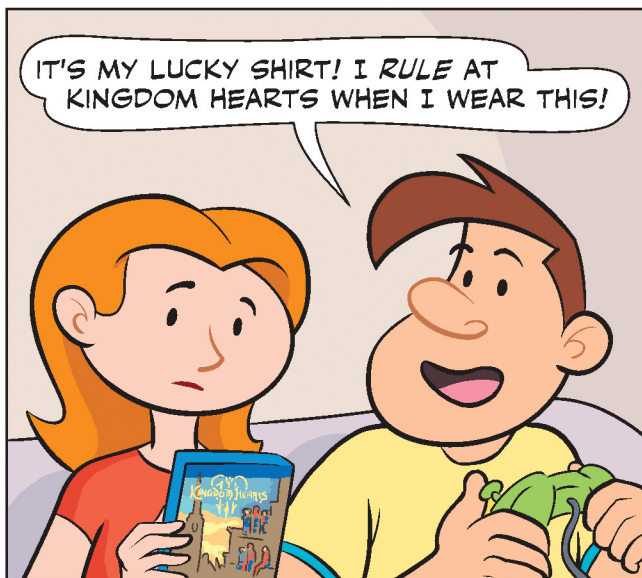
Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill is on the Disney Dining Plan.





# AMUSEMENT PARK

By Vince Dorse, Created by Pat N. Lewis & John Green







## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the 10 differences in these two photos?

Guests at Disney's Hollywood Studios can now meet James P. "Sulley" Sullivan and Mike Wazowski inside Walt Disney Presents.

### BEFORE



### AFTER



1. The emblem on Wazowski's hat has turned upside-down.
2. Wazowski now has four toes on his right foot.
3. There is an additional flower on the top right side of the door.
4. A purple spot has disappeared from Sulley's right leg.
5. Sulley's horns have turned green.
6. The yellow stripe on the floor (bottom left) is wider.
7. There is an additional key on the bottom of the keyboard (left center of photo).
8. Wazowski has three fingers on his right hand instead of four.
9. The orange doorknob on the door (center) has vanished.
10. A flower has appeared on the wall below Wazowski's tank (bottom right).





# THE RUMOR QUEUE

Have a rumor, comment, or question? Send them our way at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).

By Tharin White

*Unless where otherwise noted, the following is rumor and speculation, and should not be regarded as fact unless confirmed by the companies mentioned.*

**F** From the powers of anonymous tips, the DisTwitter hashtag and the photo capabilities of @Bioreconstruct, rumors are abundant on upcoming projects. SeaWorld and Busch Gardens continue to keep up to date with construction tours and backstage views. Disney has been surprisingly open about construction, whereas Universal has closed its doors tight, as usual, trying ever so hard not to let one secret slip. Nonetheless, rumors have amassed.

## Disney Parks

Disney Parks' biggest rumors currently revolve around the opening dates of attractions that have already been announced. Mickey and Minnie's Runaway Railway is expected to open late this summer, with a possible late August opening. Rumors also suggest that Runaway Railway will be heading to Disneyland's Toontown as the next step of expansion after Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. Speaking of Star Wars, rumors are telling us that Disneyland's Galaxy's Edge will open at the end of June, with Walt Disney World's opening early October.

Disney's Animal Kingdom's Dinosaur attraction may be getting an Indiana Jones revamp. If this comes to

fruition, it would also come with a general overhaul of DinoLand U.S.A., but we don't expect to see anything for many years. On the other hand, strong sources are pointing to a new Club 33 location located near the bridge in-between Pandora and Africa. There were rumors this would be a Lion King dark ride, but limited space in that area makes us think that a Club 33 location is much more feasible.

At the Magic Kingdom, we are fairly sure we'll see major lighting and audio upgrades in Tomorrowland in preparation for Tron Lightcycle Power Run. While the overall land isn't expected to change drastically, the nighttime scene will be much more Tron-esque with modern music and LED lighting.

Over at Epcot, there are varying rumors about the idea of a hotel near the park entrance. There are also talks about Future World as a whole getting a revamp to focus less on large structures and instead have plentiful paths and foliage.

## Universal

Universal has been very quiet about all future development. The biggest rumors revolve around their upcoming fourth theme park. Universal has been buying parcels of land near the Orange

County Convention Center. Leaked team member-only documents and public permits have all but confirmed that the new park is coming and may be named Universal's Fantastic Worlds. We expect this park to be centered on Nintendo, with each individual land being heavily focused on immersion. A Fantasyland-esque area focused on DreamWorks and Illumination Entertainment would be another key land.

Along with the new park, it appears a Jurassic Park raptor roller coaster is in Universal's future. This would be a custom high-speed coaster focused on big thrills. It would take over most of the Jurassic Park area in Islands of Adventure.

We have heard rumors that an "IT" movie house may be appearing for Halloween Horror Nights, as well as a sequel house to last year's Stranger Things haunted house.

## SeaWorld and Busch Gardens

Over at Busch Gardens Tampa, the Gwazi coaster should be getting a major overhaul to be transformed into a hybrid steel and wooden coaster. SeaWorld San Antonio is still expected to get an upgraded Turtle Trek experience with new 4K projections and in-theater effects.



## MYSTERY PHOTO

### WIN AN ATTRACTIONS MYSTERY MERCH BOX!

Tell us which theme park you can see this mural in. Hint: This is just one section of a large mural. You'll see it by looking up and to your left shortly after entering this theme park. To enter, e-mail your answer, along with your name and mailing address to [mystery@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:mystery@attractionsmagazine.com).



The deadline for entries is May 10, 2019. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win an Attractions Mystery Merch Box. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed per year.



### LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Greg Lonnquist from Henderson, Nevada. He recognized the wait time inside the tire is from Roger Rabbit's Car Toon Spin in Mickey's Toontown at Disneyland.







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## IN THE LOOP

By Andy Guinigundo

### Gwazi to Roar Again as Steel-Wood Hybrid



**Tampa, Fla.**— Gwazi was a GCI-manufactured dueling wooden coaster at Busch Gardens Tampa. It opened in 1999, but closed in 2015. Something interesting happened to the ride that was once Gwazi – nothing. The train cars were shipped to a sister park and some building materials were recycled at other parks, but the main framework of the ride remained. When Busch Gardens announced Florida’s tallest launch coaster, Tigris, last fall, they hinted at big things to come on the former Gwazi site. The language they used included words like “hybrid” and that it would be a “rocky” ride. To coaster enthusiasts, these were not so subtle hints. In late December, these suspicions were confirmed when a construction application filed with the city of Tampa for the Gwazi site was updated to include Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) as the ride manufacturer. RMC is perhaps most famous for their wooden coaster rebuilds, most recently opening Steel Vengeance at Cedar Point. RMC utilizes steel track technology that is laid on a wooden track frame, that allows for maneuvers only possible with steel track. Once open in 2020, this new coaster will be North America’s tallest hybrid, and the fastest, steepest hybrid coaster in the world. It will feature a maximum height of more than 200 feet. The coaster will offer all-new thrill elements, as well as use restored elements of Gwazi.

### Copperhead Strike to Slither onto the Scene at Carowinds



**Charlotte, N.C.** – When Copperhead Strike debuts this year at Carowinds theme park, it will be the Carolinas’ first double launch coaster. The backstory of the coaster is that it simulates the “harrowing chase of getaway cars racing through rolling farmland”. As the train (resembling a 1930s sport coupe) rolls out of the station, riders are immediately sent into a jo-joe roll. It then hits the first 360-degree loop. The steel track sits low



to the ground and will hit speeds of 50 mph. The coaster will invert a total of five times. Perhaps one of the marquee features will be the hang time loop following the second launch – a launch that will accelerate guests from 35 to 50 mph in just two seconds. The ride is being manufactured by Germany’s Mack Rides. It will utilize a Linear

Synchronous Motors launch system. The ride is expected to debut this spring.

### Pair of Indoor Coasters to Open at Nickelodeon Universe



**East Rutherford, N.J.** – Apparently, the day of the American mega-mall is not over. The soon-to-open American Dream Meadowlands mall will feature a Nickelodeon Universe indoor amusement park. The other Nickelodeon Universe theme park is at America’s other gigantic mall – The Mall of America in Minnesota. The names of the two intertwining coasters within Nickelodeon





Universe are TMNT (Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) Shellraiser and The Shredder, in reference to the archenemy. TMNT Shellraiser will be a Gerstlauer Euro Fighter coaster which features a single, highly maneuverable ride car, that is not a train. Reportedly, it will have seven inversions, a record-breaking beyond vertical (over 120 degree) drop, and reach a speed of 62 mph. The Shredder will be the longest and tallest free-spinning coaster in the world. This too will be manufactured by Gerstlauer. The track layouts of the coasters will intertwine with each other. The mall and indoor park will open sometime this year.



A SpongeBob ride at Mall of America.

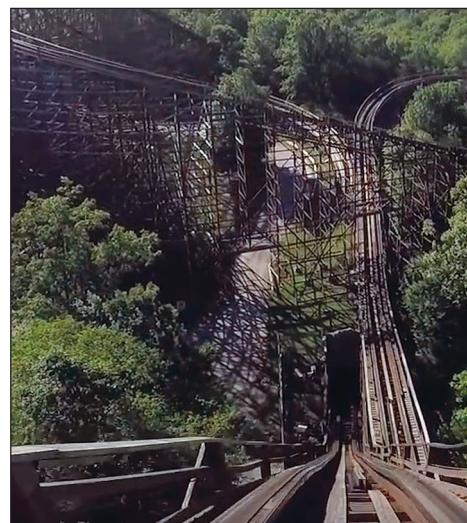
## Kings Dominion Announces Abrupt Closure of Volcano: The Blast Coaster

Doswell, Va. – Kings Dominion completed the 2018 season when it opened a great RMC coaster, Twisted Timbers. Unfortunately, in the off season, it announced the closure of a classic coaster, Volcano: The Blast Coaster. Volcano was built by Intamin in 1998 and was truly a one-of-a-kind coaster. The coaster was an inverted (i.e. track on top) launching coaster. It reached a height of 155 feet and hit speeds up to 70 mph. Part of the ride was through a man-made volcano. The park decided the ride no longer met their standards for reliability and guest satis-

faction. Translated, it sounds like it was no longer a popular ride and was closed for repairs often. Often, when once popular rides close, parks are able to give a warning and make an event of the last days and “last rides”. However, in February, without a lot of fanfare, in a short post on their website, they made the announcement that the ride would not open in 2019.

## Kings Island Paints The Beast Trains in Retro Paint Scheme

Mason, Ohio – This year marks the 40th year of operation for the historic wooden roller coaster, The Beast. When opened, it was both the longest and fastest wooden roller coaster in the world. It still holds the record for longest wooden coaster at 7,359 feet and with speeds in the 60 mph range, it’s still speedy. After 40 years, the ride still captures the imagination and creates lifelong coaster fans. Whether it is the meandering track layout through the Southern Ohio woods, the multiple tunnels, the double helix finale or the unforgettable night ride, the coaster continues to thrill. As part of the birthday celebration, the trains have been restored to their original “flame-themed” paint scheme, which is red for the front cars, orange for the middle cars and yellow for the back cars. Birthday news and other



content will be posted to the park’s website as the year commences.

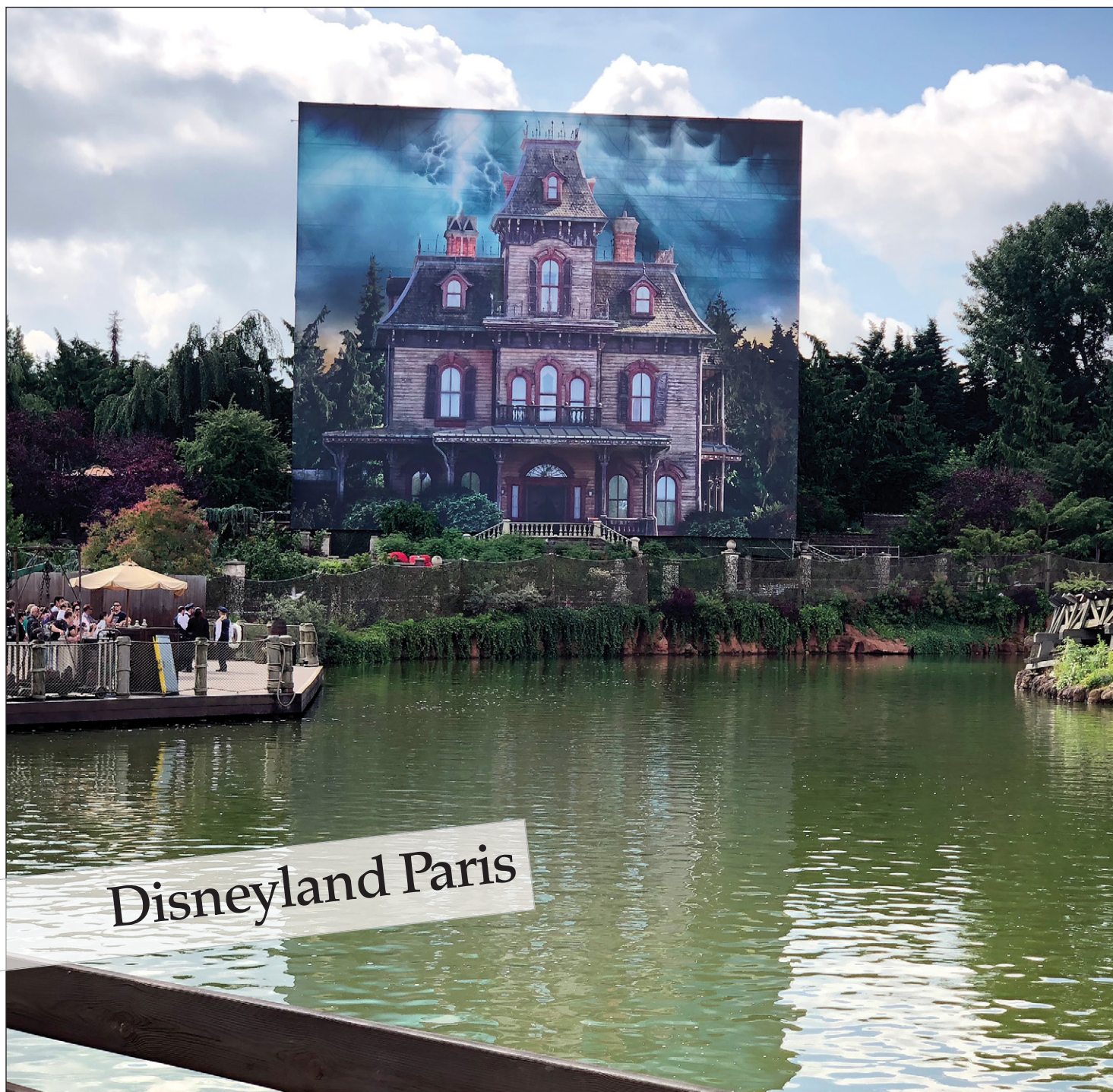


PHOTOS BY NORMAN SNOOK





## LIGHTS, CAMERA, ATTRACTION!



**W**hen Disney puts up construction scrim, they like them to blend in as much as possible, often featuring a photo of what's behind the walls while they're working on them. This was also the case at Disneyland Paris last summer as they were refurbishing Phantom Manor, their version of The Haunted Mansion. It's

still under refurbishment, but is expected to reopen soon. Not only are they giving it a refresh, they are adding some new scenes as well. When it reopens, the story will unfold through the ride, finally giving guests the answers to the questions, Who is the Phantom? Who is the bride? What happened years ago that led to all of this?



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Summer 2011



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Summer 2012



Fall 2012



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Summer 2015



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Summer 2016



Fall 2016



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Summer 2017



Fall 2017



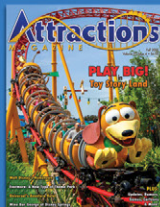
Winter 2017-18



Spring 2018



Summer 2018



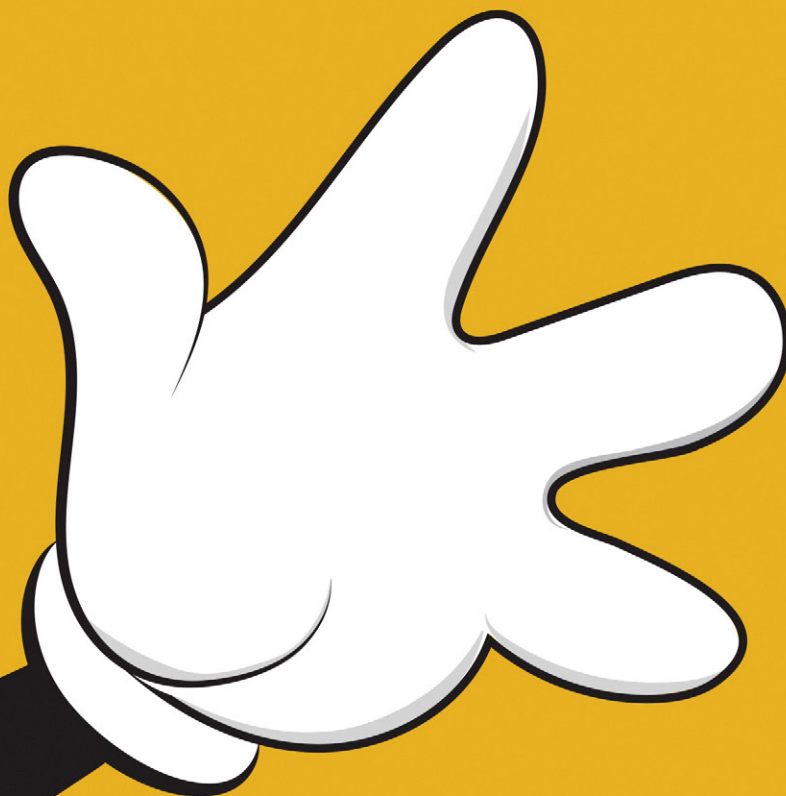
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